Gordon Wood on Diversity Old and New

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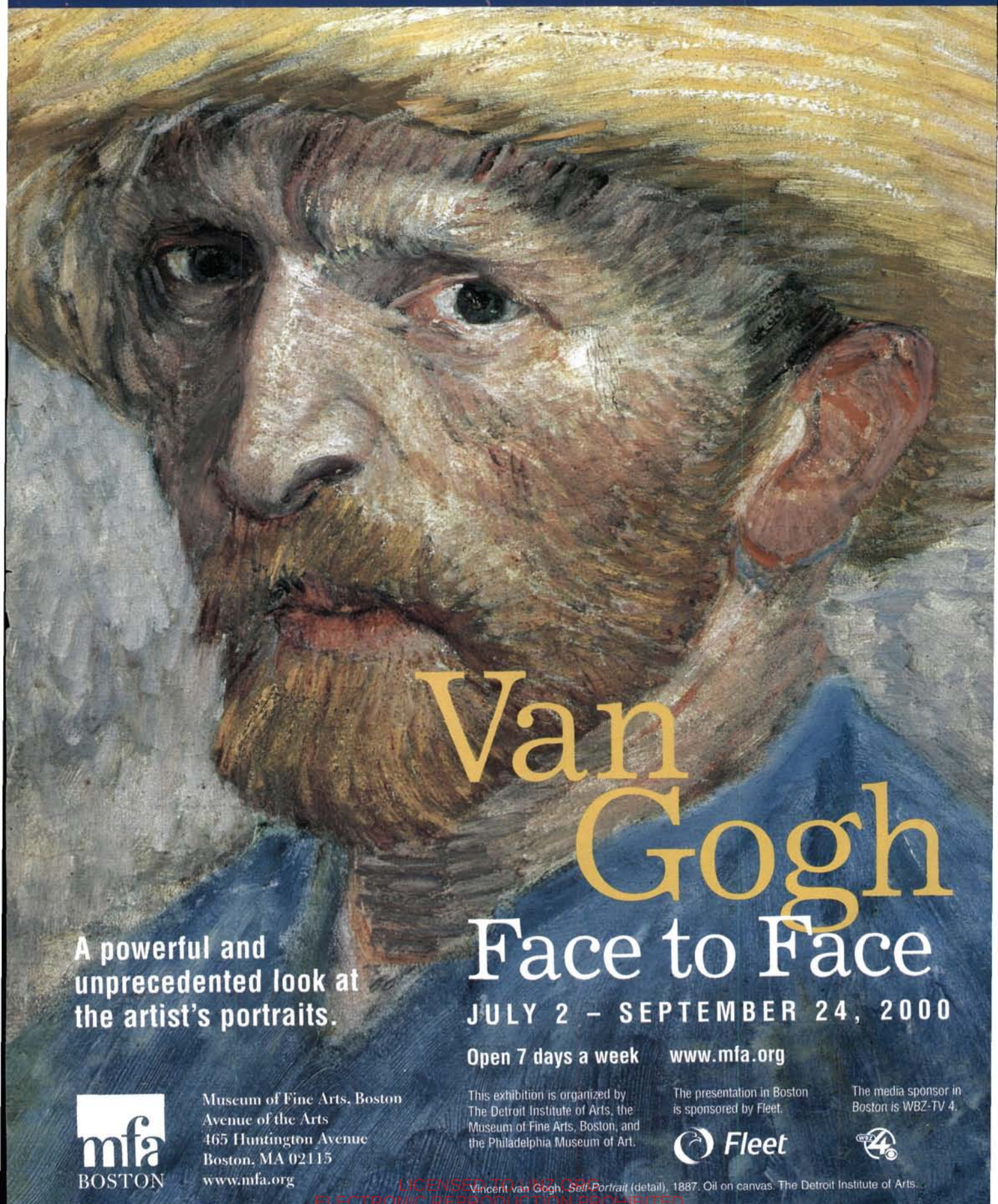

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Marriage penalty

TO THE EDITORS:

Andrew Sullivan is of course right that marriage should be open to gays ("State of the Union," May 8), but in Vermont even the most ardent gay rights activists eventually supported the civil-union bill when it became clear that it was that or nothing at all. The term "marriage" was realized to be less important (for now) than the tangible, considerable legal rights the legislation affords. These new rights are terribly important not only for gay couples but for the children many of them are parenting together, thanks to the adoption rights that have already been won in Vermont. If Sullivan has guessed correctly that the divorce rate will be lower for gay couples, then the institution of civil union may one day be a more powerful symbol of committed partnership than its venerable antecedent.

Sullivan's comparison of this legislation to anti-miscegenation laws is unfair. Those laws had the effect of excluding mixed-race couples from the benefits of civil marriage. Vermont's law will have the effect of extending such benefits to same-sex couples.

ROBERT PELS
Burlington, Vermont

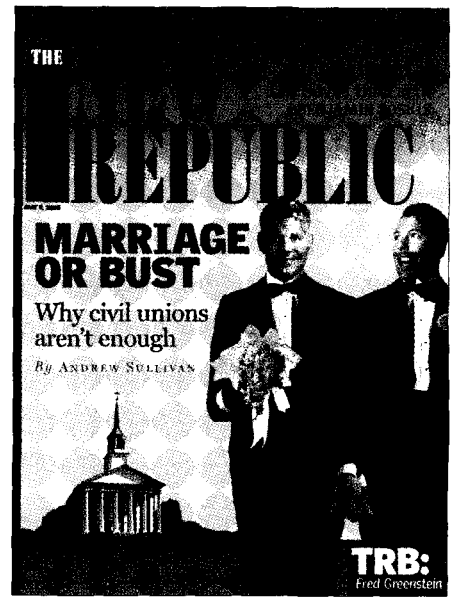
TO THE EDITORS:

Andrew Sullivan certainly demolishes the arguments against gay marriage, but he doesn't establish it as an equal rights issue. The law grants two persons of opposite sex the right to marry. Gay persons also have that right. The fact that they can't or won't exercise it doesn't per se give them a claim to a different right.

ROBERT F. WHITE
Murrieta, California

TO THE EDITORS:

Andrew Sullivan's otherwise fine article on civil union goes too far in analogizing his invitation to a wedding to that of a black guest invited to an all-white country club. Because whites have many options to hold social functions at places that do not discriminate against blacks, choosing an all-white club is, at least arguably, an endorsement of the club's policies. Sullivan's heterosexual friends, many of whom probably support his right to marry, have no power to get married in a state that allows gay marriages—there is none. Does Sullivan apologize to 20-year-olds when he exits a drinking establishment? Does he apologize to those under 18 or to resident aliens when he discusses politics? Does he apologize to people with physical



limitations when performing some physical activity? Most people are, in some way, unable fully to participate in some function. So long as others do not perpetuate our exclusion, we hardly expect an apology merely because they are able to enjoy that activity.

THOMAS A. ISAACSON
Boulder, Colorado

TO THE EDITORS:

Andrew Sullivan's strong and impassioned argument that we must go beyond Vermont to recognize same-sex union as "marriage" is no better than his initial premise: that marriage is a civil right. It isn't.

Marriage is a social institution—probably the most important one there is. Existing for as long as we know in human society and in no sense a creation of the American polity, it has, like most social institutions, gone through changes over time, and it has varied considerably from one society to another. But, everywhere and at every time, its essential characteristic has been the union of man and woman, constituting a family.

A civil right, in American practice, is something that arises under and from the Constitution. The structure of laws that has been built on that base includes recognition of the marriage institution; it sets up rules that define it and benefits that surround it. And the Fourteenth Amendment requires that those benefits must be equally available to all man-woman couples. But nothing in the Constitution or in the laws defines marriage in the way Sullivan prefers, nor is there anything in the underlying logic of our system that impels us to so redefine it. Contrary to his assertion, in this discourse the burden of proof

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rests squarely on those who would work such a drastic change in the central institution of society.

JAMES W. ROBERTS
Associate Professor of Political Science
University of Southern Maine
Portland, Maine

Gas and go

TO THE EDITORS:

I was the "anti-environmentalist conservative" who, according to your magazine, supposedly "endors[ed] some of environmentalism's premises" on Earth Day with my sign LEO, CAN I BORROW YOUR TAHOE? ("Green With Envy," by Benjamin Soskis, May 8). Since when does pointing out hypocrisy imply acceptance of the anti-SUV mentality of environmentalists?

In a *Time* magazine essay, Leonardo DiCaprio wrote, "One of the most important and immediate things we can do is drive fuel-efficient, high-gas-mileage cars." One should practice what one preaches, and DiCaprio, the former owner of a Jeep Cherokee and the current owner of a Chevy Tahoe, does not. Unfortunately, however, Earth Day's celebrities and activists refuse to confront the all-too-real human toll of ostensibly "clean" energy, such as wind or solar power. We certainly could pave our wilderness and open space with solar panels, and we could kill birds with windmills. We could keep the developing world in poverty by starving it of energy, and we ourselves could return to primitive lifestyles by reducing our energy consumption, technology, affluence, and progress. Or we could recognize, as the Environmental Protection Agency does, that by most measures the air is getting cleaner and will continue to do so. We could acknowledge that affluence and technology give us the ability to care for the environment. DiCaprio ought to reconsider his message, and his actions, before he tells everyone else to change their lifestyles to suit his whims.

KENDRA OKONSKI
Competitive Enterprise Institute
Washington, D.C.

Thorny situation

TO THE EDITORS:

"I doubt that anyone—no matter how poetic—has ever been killed as a result of picking roses," Brian Phillips opines, apparently unaware of the critical hazard created by small closed puncture wounds ("The Angel and the Egoist," May 8). When I was an intern in 1955, the chief medical resident's father was admitted to the hospital with tetanus. It was a result of pricking his finger on a rose thorn, and it killed him. Such puncture wounds—be they the result of thorns (rose, cactus, mock orange, etc.) or nails, tacks, slivers of glass, and such—create a near-perfect environment for the growth of anaerobic bacteria (tetanus among them). They also may harbor and foster a host of other bacteria, many of which might, in a person with impaired immunity, result in a fatal infection. With "leukemia ... already in its advanced stages," Rainer Maria Rilke was a clear candidate for a variety of fatal infections inflicted by the thorn of a rose.

FRANKLIN T. EVANS, M.D.
Baltimore, Maryland

Parental authority

TO THE EDITORS:

Your "Parent Trap" blurb criticizes the Family Research Council (FRC) for denouncing Attorney General Janet Reno's Easter Saturday raid on the González home (Notebook, May 8). You suggest that our parental rights advocacy means

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Flee Market

WHAT HAS THE AFL-CIO been thinking all these years? America is a big country, and foreign trade is a secondary issue, which is why the U.S. economy can go on prospering even when whole regions of the world fall into economic panic and disaster. The real problem besetting America's working class is the giant chasm that has opened between the rich and everyone else. The United States used to be a dreamland of social equality compared with Western Europe. We read Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* because, in turning its pages, our patriotic hearts pound with pride and nostalgia at how astonished a fair-minded Frenchman could be, long ago, upon discovering such an egalitarian society. But, in matters of social equality, Western Europe is not the feudal nightmare it once was. And America may still boast of many things, but social equality is no longer among them.

So why has the American labor movement spent the last seven or eight years fighting with such ferocity against the growth of foreign trade and investment—so much so that trade has become labor's most visible issue—instead of focusing on the much bigger question of domestic inequality? The psychological reason, some people suggest, may be that, in the world of American politics, social inequality is a giant issue, and the AFL-CIO is no longer the giant organization it was in the 1950s. Ours is a conservative age, and it has become a little daunting even to speak about social equality as a democratic ideal. You get hooted at with the words "equality of results," as if nothing were more outrageous.

And so the labor movement, conscious of its weakness, has convinced itself that foreign trade, which is a smaller and easier thing to discuss, must surely be the working class's gravest enemy. And, with that belief in mind, the AFL-CIO duly marched off to war. The war didn't go badly, either, at least psychologically—even if NAFTA did go into effect and China will now become a normal trading partner of the United States. For the labor movement has fought valiantly, and blood has coursed through militant veins, and no one can say anymore that America's unions have mummified into lifeless bureaucracies.

But what would have happened if the AFL-CIO had emphasized a different set of battles? The trade wars have nicely demonstrated that, even at one-third of its size of yore, the AFL-CIO can still mobilize all kinds of people who don't have many other avenues of political participation. You can laugh all you want at the student demonstrators who ran around Seattle and Washington, D.C., denouncing the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the other diabolical agents of globalization. But those were big demonstrations, and the students were in earnest, and plainly they represented a larger, mild-mannered cohort temperamentally disinclined to march in the streets. The whole complicated question of the rights and wrongs of work has become a topic of national discussion, and largely because of the AFL-CIO. So it is not true that, on big public issues, labor is too weak and shrunken to be heard.

I wonder, then, what would have happened if the AFL-CIO had spent these last few years kicking and screaming about social inequality instead of foreign trade. What would have happened if the labor movement had fought as hard for a universal health care bill, when such a thing was on the table, as it fought against NAFTA? The unions have hammered away more quietly on the minimum wage, the right of workers to take leaves, saving Social Security from the vicissitudes of stock-market gambling, and several other excellent issues. But what if the labor movement had melded those issues into a single theme and taken that single theme to the country, not just to Washington, D.C., and pointed to the depleted state of labor law, the semi-ruined condition of the National Labor Relations Board in the post-Reagan years, the plutocratic turn in the Internal Revenue Service, and other sinister developments?

The unions could have shown that social inequality in modern America derives from political decisions, not just impersonal market forces. If labor had talked about the domestic causes of social inequality with the fervor and moral intensity it poured into opposing foreign trade, the tenor of public discussion might be different, and we might be spending this election year arguing about the undemocratic direction that American life has lately taken instead of about sweatshops on the far side of the earth. At least the issue would have been raised.

It's only fair to note, in the AFL-CIO's defense, that all over the world people seem transfixed by the growth of international trade. The real meaning of globalization is a vast new elaboration of the classic division of labor, which has created a lot of new wealth. But nothing about globalization or any other division of labor ensures a proper division of the benefits. I happen to be writing this column in Mexico, a country that, in the age of NAFTA, has doubled its exports, and whose economy is advancing so quickly that people worry about what is called "overheating." And yet large numbers of Mexicans have ended up poorer than ever.

In Mexico, even more than in the United States, a rise in absolute wealth has been accompanied by a rise in social inequality. And so, in Mexico as in so many other countries, many people assume that foreign trade, not the domestic policy of their own countries, must be the true villain, and that maybe foreign trade ought to be reined in. It's hard to believe, but one day in Mexico City I watched a delegation of Mexican workers from General Motors march down the grand Paseo de la Reforma carrying a banner denouncing NAFTA. They had their nerve. But people like them are symptomatic of the times.

The real conundrum right now, for Americans and Mexicans and probably half the people on earth, has something in common with the challenge posed by early capitalism and the industrial revolution in England a couple of centuries ago. In those days, too, radical innovations in the division of labor created a genuine increase in overall wealth. Yet peasants sank deeper into poverty. And, just as people did in those times, we can respond today by marching into town and smashing the new economic methods. Or, alternatively, we can do nothing at all, in the benign expectation that everything will turn out for the best in, say, 500 years. Or we can choose a third alternative and actively promote and even admire the new economic efficiency, while also promoting a few serious measures for spreading the benefits. That is what the AFL-CIO ought to be advocating today, a program for social equality—now that, to everyone's surprise, labor turns out to be rather good at making people think about economics and democracy at the same time.

PAUL BERMAN

PAUL BERMAN is author of *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968* (W.W. Norton).

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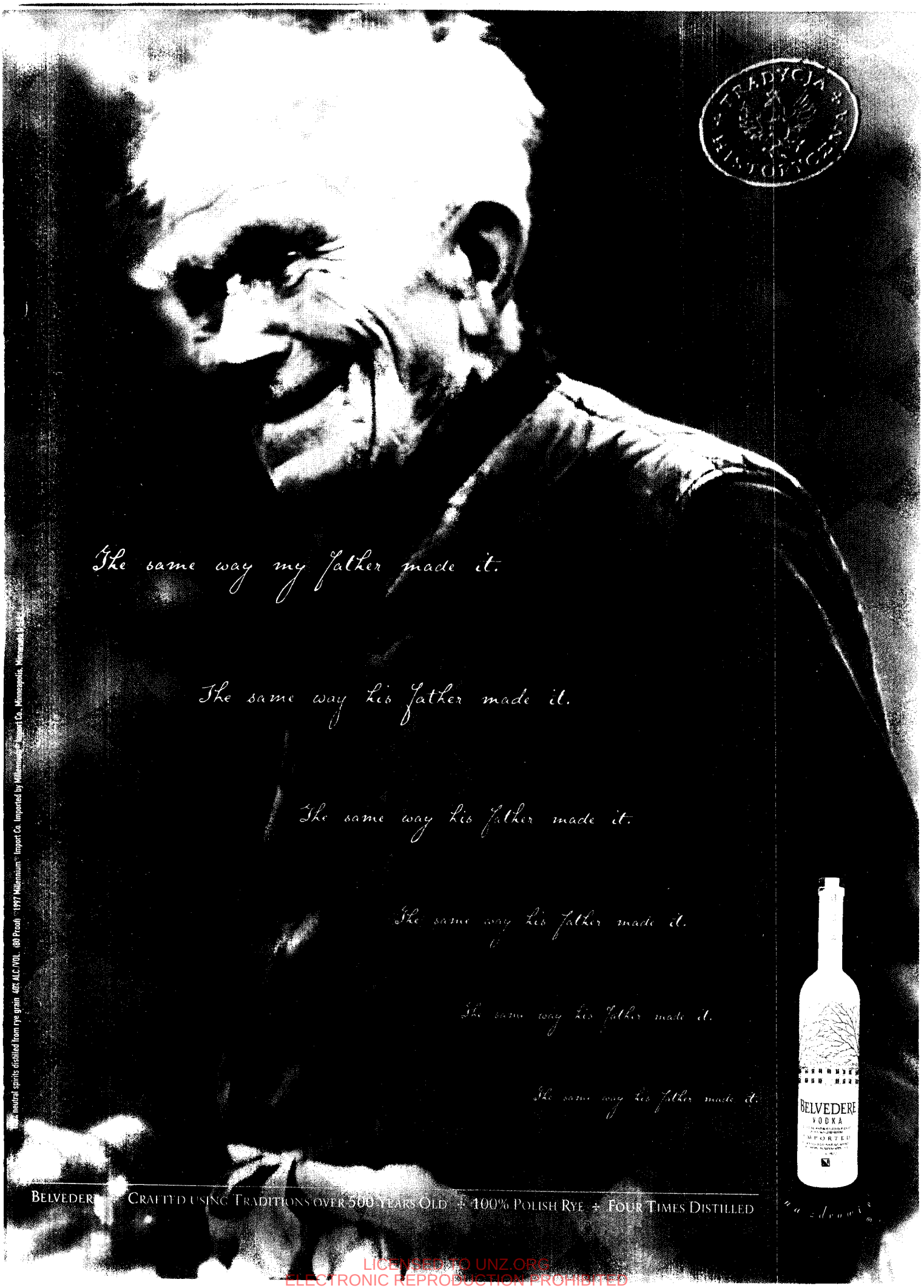

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The Bush Doctrine

GEORGE W. BUSH has an idea about American nuclear strategy. His idea has exceedingly little merit, but first another question must be asked. How stupid does Bush think we are? For the plain implication of his idea about American nuclear strategy is that he has ideas about these things. To be sure, a presidential candidate has to seem to think about national security. He is asking the American people to trust him with the "football" (as the Secret Service refers to the nuclear codes) for four years. Thus an impression of strategic competence must be established; and to this end Bush made his speech, "New Leadership on National Security," on May 23 in the company of the titans of the Republican national-security establishment, and Condoleezza Rice. The plan was that the governor's proximity to Henry Kissinger would confer upon him the appearance of reflection. The plan failed. Not even his proximity to Brent Scowcroft could disguise the fact that the Republican front-runner has not brooded excessively upon the stringencies of deterrence. He looked and sounded small.

So what is Bush's "new vision"? He believes that the United States should "pursue the lowest possible number [of nuclear weapons] consistent with our national security.... We should not keep weapons that our military planners do not need." Fine, fine. But what number does his vision demand? He did not say. He worried about the "risks of accidental or unauthorized launch," which is an estimable worry, but not exactly a strategic worry. And he promised that "as president I will ask the secretary of defense to conduct an assessment of our nuclear force posture." Hail to the chief!

There is also the matter of strategic redundancy. This is the traditional American doctrine that security in the nuclear age demands more weapons than we need. The United States bases its nuclear weapons on land, at sea, and in the air, so that any enemy contemplating a nuclear attack on the United States will be certain that the United States will retain the power to retaliate with nuclear weapons, regardless of the effects of the first strike it has suffered; and so the enemy will stay its hand. We may not "need" as many weapons as we have, but we "need" a lot; and we will never "need" only a few or none at all. The "new security environment" that Bush trumpets is not as new as he thinks. He has just discovered deterrence, and already he is tampering with it.

"Our mutual security need no longer depend on a nuclear balance of terror," Bush proclaimed. What does he know that we don't know? The peace with fitful Russia is hardly the beginning and the end of our strategic situation. The number of nuclear states is growing. The size of nuclear weapons is shrinking. The world outside the freakishly placid and prosperous West is highly unstable, in some regions to the point of madness. But Bush seems to have been struck with the bug of nuclear utopianism. At Bush's press conference, Colin Powell went so far as to declare that "it's time to take a fresh look at the entire political situation that requires the continuing existence of strategic offensive weapons." Evidently the general has been confused by the convergence of the end of the cold war with the millennium.

Nuclear utopianism is a chimera in two parts: unilateral reductions of the American arsenal, and a dazzling ballistic missile defense. "America must build effective missile defenses," Bush said, "based on the best available options, at the earliest possible date." He uttered these words with an air of bravery, as if anybody any longer denies that there is a place in American strategy for a defensive component. Technological developments long ago retired the old dogmatism about defenses, and made them sensible. The Clinton administration, too, wants to build missile defenses. But what variety of defenses shall we build? Bush wants a system that would "protect all fifty states—and our friends and allies and deployed forces overseas." A shield, or a new element of our posture? He didn't say. A system based in space? He didn't say. A system that would depose the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty? He didn't say. Anyway, the Clinton administration is itself considering an adjustment in the ABM Treaty to allow for a limited but effective program of land-based defenses—a system that would be a feature of the American nuclear deterrent, not a condition of its abolition.

When Al Gore suggested that Bush's approach to nuclear deterrence was "risky," the tender media leapt upon the word as if it were a terrible imprecation. But risk is the subject here: a nuclear policy is wrong if it is risky and right if it is not risky. At West Point on May 27, Gore explained that "an approach that combines serious unilateral reductions with an attempt to build a massive defensive system will create instability, and thus undermine our security." He was right. More to the point, he knew what he was talking about. So let us have defenses, but not fantastic ones. And let us have arguments about the new world, but not incompetent ones. ■

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NOTEBOOK

HOT AIR: We'll say this for DC Air, the new airline proposed last week as part of the United Airlines-US Airways merger: Its name speaks volumes about how much Washington's image has improved under Mayor Anthony Williams. Can you imagine a business wanting to brand itself with the D.C. moniker while Marion Barry was still mayor? Alas, that's about the only positive thing to be said about the new airline. Slated to be run by Black Entertainment Television (BET) founder Robert L. Johnson, DC Air will take over most of USAir's operations at Washington's Reagan National Airport, since Washington is one of the few markets where United's and USAir's routes significantly overlap. Rather than dividing up USAir's Washington routes among existing airlines, United and USAir—in hopes of passing muster with the antitrust regulators who'll have to approve the merger—have decided to create a new airline by selling those routes to Johnson for a reported $142 million. The sale, United and USAir executives maintain, will preserve competition in the Washington market. But DC Air seems intended to preserve not competition so much as the fiction of competition. First of all, DC Air won't actually compete on any United routes; United will take over USAir's most valuable Washington commodity, the Washington-New York-Boston shuttle. What's more, DC Air will provide fewer flights out of Reagan National than USAir currently does (some of USAir's precious takeoff and landing slots—Reagan National is one of the most traffic-constrained airports in the country—will apparently go unused). Finally, DC Air will be, at least for its first two years, what's known as a "virtual airline"—leasing many of its planes, complete with pilots and flight attendants, from another airline. And guess which airline that will be? United. Even worse, DC Air will pay United for the use of its ground personnel, such as mechanics and gate attendants. United Chairman Jim Goodwin says DC Air is not United's pawn and, in his words, is "anything but a sham," but we think he protests too much. So do others: the Air Travelers Association, a consumer group, has objected to the DC Air deal on the grounds that USAir's slots at Reagan National are a public trust and therefore should have been auctioned off by the government. Five shareholder suits have been filed against USAir and United, alleging that the sale of the routes to Johnson, a member of USAir's board, benefited him at the expense of the company's shareholders; a sixth suit claims the sale to Johnson was a "self-dealing transaction." Still, efforts to block the creation of DC Air (and the United-USAir merger on which it depends) are almost certain to fail. With Johnson at its helm, DC Air would be the nation's first large minority-owned airline—a fact that will likely weigh heavily on the consciences of anyone wanting to prevent the merger, thereby greasing the political skids for its approval. Indeed, race—combined with Johnson's ties to the Democratic Party, for which he has raised a small fortune—would seem the primary reason United and USAir offered the routes to the media baron, an aviation novice, in the first place. And, if the point weren't obvious enough, Johnson, who has never shied away from exploiting race in his business dealings (he once accused the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists of racial bias for trying to organize BET workers), is making it crystal clear. "This is a unique endeavor for an African American entrepreneur," he told *The Washington Post* of his DC Air venture. "I know something about creating value." And he—along with USAir and United—also knows something about pulling a fast one.

FARMER'S MARKET: In 1996, when the Republican leaders of Congress passed the Freedom to Farm Act, which phased out the New Deal system of automatic crop-subsidy payments, they had a clever political strategy. Eliminating the automatic payments, they reasoned, would deprive rural Democrats of the largesse they used to buy the loyalty of their constituents. Farmers, once removed from the federal teat, would become—in the words of one GOP strategist—"heavily armed small businessmen," and thus natural Republican voters. Of course, the Republicans had sound policy on their side, too. While the government should aid the poor generally, it should not single out favored industries for protection; the distressed farmer is no more worthy of protection than the distressed restaurateur. Even worse, most of the farmers who received subsidies were not distressed at all; much of the money went to large agribusinesses. But, as we have had occasion to complain on a nearly annual basis since 1996, all the sensible policy benefits promised by reform have melted away. Congress last week approved a multibillion-dollar "emergency" farm bailout, the third such emergency bailout in the four years since Freedom to Farm was enacted. A new pattern seems clear: Rather than automatically shoveling out billions in aid every year, Congress now does so by specific appropriation, with barely a peep of dissent in either party. Rural Democrats, meanwhile, never had it so good. Rather than having to grandstand on behalf of a program that runs on automatic pilot, they can take credit for a brand-new helping of pork every year. The GOP's rural realignment, needless to say, has yet to materialize.

CATCH OF THE DAY: Just a few weeks ago, it looked as if Donato Dalrymple's 15 minutes of fame were just about up. Elián González's "fisherman" friend had been portrayed in a memorable *Washington Post* story as a world-class buffoon, a publicity seeker extraordinaire who wasn't even a fisherman but a housecleaner—the day Dalrymple plucked Elián from the ocean was the first time he'd ever been fishing. As Dalrymple's cousin, who was with him the day the two saved Elián, told the *Post*, Dalrymple was the Kato Kaelin of the Elián saga. And, like Kaelin, it seemed that Dalrymple would fade mercifully into oblivion. But, luckily for Dalrymple, there exists another world-class buffoon whose own 15 minutes appear to be nearing an end and who's anxious to save both Dalrymple and himself from this horrible fate: Donato Dalrymple, meet Larry Klayman. Klayman heads Judicial Watch, a conservative legal watchdog group that for the past six years has levied gratuitous lawsuit after gratuitous lawsuit against the Clinton administration. Now, with Whitewater

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and Filegate and Travelgate and all the rest tapped out, Klayman has announced he'll represent Dalrymple in a $100 million lawsuit against Attorney General Janet Reno, accusing her of violating Dalrymple's civil rights during the three-minute Immigration and Naturalization Service raid on Lázaro González's house in Miami. Who says the courts are no longer a vehicle for America's great moral struggles?

START THEIR ENGINES: Last week, from Cape Canaveral, a rocket blasted the Eutelsat W4 communications satellite into orbit. No big deal? So it seemed, since the media took no notice. But notice was merited: this satellite rode atop the first American space vehicle powered by Russian engines. The launch rocket was an Atlas III, a new derivative of the Atlas ICBM, which was designed in the early '60s to obliterate the old Soviet Union. Not only have all remaining Atlas rockets been converted to peaceful uses, but the new variant uses engines bought from the nation the rocket was originally intended to destroy. Lockheed Martin, which manufactures the Atlas III, chose a Russian engine called the RD-180 for the rocket's main stage because Russian-built space motors have a good reputation; the transaction was entirely free-market. To the original cold war designers of the Atlas, the thought of a Russian company as prime subcontractor for a U.S. space launch would have seemed a bizarre fantasy. Today it's not even remarked upon.

PRIVACY GOES PUBLIC: Jeffrey Rosen's essay in this issue ("Fall of Private Man," page 22) is adapted from his first book, *The Unwanted Gaze: The Destruction of Privacy in America*, which is being published by Random House this week. Many of the ideas in this important book were developed first in these pages, and we are both proud and grateful to have participated in their creation.

NAME THAT PUBLISHER: In Jackson Lears's article "Gambling for Grace" (May 29), the publisher of *Card Sharps and Bucket Shops: Gambling in Nineteenth-Century America* was mistakenly identified as Doubleday. The correct publisher is Routledge. We regret the error. ■

VINT'S WEEK

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On the Hill

Old Man and the Pea

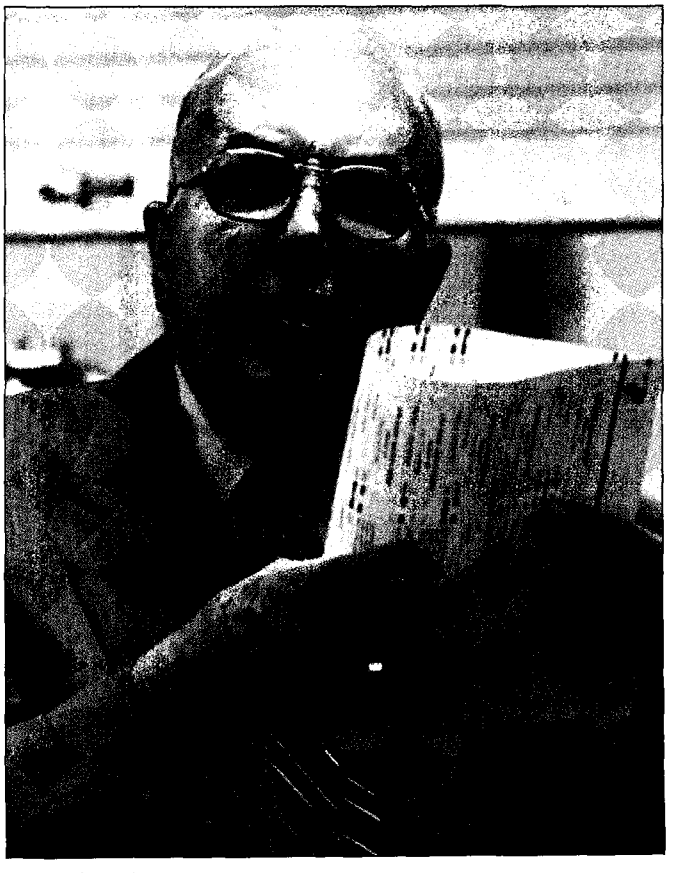
By Sarah Wildman

Sometime in the next few weeks, without big demonstrations, front-page media coverage, or even particularly heated debate, Congress will likely do something long considered unthinkable: soften the Cuba embargo. The legislation, which would end unilateral food and medicine sanctions on Cuba and four other rogue states, isn't new; it's been around in various forms for years. What is new is its success. As recently as last year, a similar bill was killed in the House Appropriations Committee. This year, it sailed through, and now it's headed for the House floor (it has already been passed by the Senate, where even Jesse Helms abandoned his past opposition to it). Unless Majority Whip Tom DeLay uses parliamentary shenanigans to keep it from a vote, it will pass there, too. The last thing the House leadership wants, says Jim Dornan, chief of staff for Republican Representative George Nethercutt, the bill's chief House sponsor, "is a straight up-or-down vote on Cuba sanctions. Because they know that would be a loser." Says Gary Jarmin, a longtime conservative who now runs the US-Cuba Foundation, a group that favors lifting the embargo, "For the first time in forty years, Republican members feel the time has come to break ranks with their colleagues."

Why the change? Three answers: the Freedom to Farm Act, permanent normal trading relations (PNTR) with China, and Elián González.

Farmers, whose foreign policy views can generally be summed up in two words—more exports—have long opposed the Cuba embargo. Many large U.S. corporations oppose it as well, for basically the same reason. Archer Daniels Midland Corporation, together with Carlson Companies, owner of Radisson Hotels, has been investigating entrées into the Cuban market for years, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, historically no friend of communism, has lobbied tirelessly to end sanctions outright. But this year farmers have a stronger case, and the reason is Freedom to Farm, the 1996 act that took away their automatic government subsidies and promised them increased exports instead. For decades, farmers have wanted access to foreign markets. Now, without public money, they *need* them, which is why right-wing farm-state Republicans like Missouri Senator John Ashcroft no longer toe an anti-Communist hard line. "The bottom line," says Dornan, "is Freedom to Farm doesn't work if we're not allowed to sell our products overseas."

But, if farm-state pols were simply arguing based on economic self-interest, few other members would join them. They needed an ideological justification, and last month, with its vote on PNTR for China, Congress gave it to them. "If our principles as a nation are that trade is good for communications and for the export of democracy," Nethercutt slyly suggests, "then it should apply to not only the totalitarian government in China but also to the totalitarian government in Cuba." During the cold war, the conservative orthodoxy on totalitarian regimes was defined by the Soviet Union: Give them no aid or comfort. Today, the conservative orthodoxy on totalitarian regimes is defined by China: Trade them to death. Luckily for Nethercutt, his bill is up for consideration in the immediate aftermath of PNTR, so the doctrine is fresh in his colleagues' minds, and they are applying it, at least as a fig leaf. "In the past 18 months, I've changed my position 180 degrees," Representative Charlie Stenholm of Texas told reporters last week. "With the collapse of the Soviet Union, this is no longer a question of fighting communism. It is a question of how to best bring about change in Cuba. It could also be of help to Texas rice farmers.... It just makes good, West Texas, tractor-seat sense to end this thing."



Castro lover?

BOB JORDAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The third thing that happened is Elián. Once one of the most powerful ethnic lobbies in the country, the Cuban-American leadership has suffered a public relations meltdown over the past nine months. "Elián [was] a political Bay of Pigs," says Ruben Rumbaut, a Cuban-born sociologist at Michigan State University. "Here is a group that has been more favorably received than others in memory. And what do they do? They are flying the American flag upside down. Why are they flying the American flag upside down? Because they don't want to comply with U.S. law. Why don't they want to comply with U.S. law? Because they want to keep [Elián] from his own father

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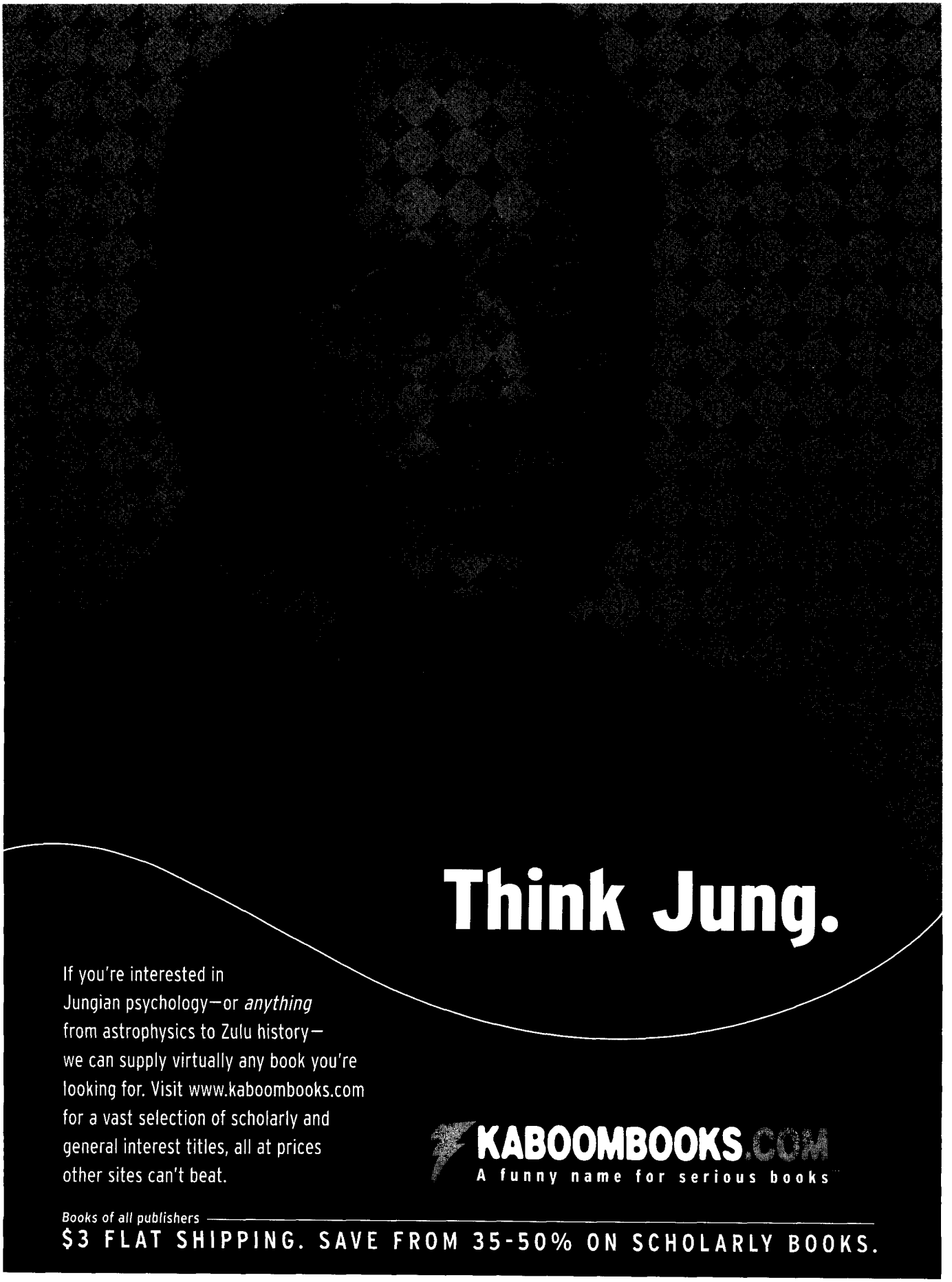

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who wants him and loves him. That just does not compute in the minds of the American electorate, by and large."

Indeed, most Americans thought the Miami Cubans were wrong, if not nuts. And views of Elián have affected views of policy towards Cuba. In 1996, 49 percent of Americans supported reestablishing diplomatic relations with Havana. Today, 71 percent do. In September 1994, 35 percent of Americans wanted to end the embargo; today, 51 percent do. And that change has not escaped members of Congress. Representative Allen Boyd of Florida told *Roll Call* earlier this week that he was switching his vote on the Nethercutt Amendment because of the Elián case. "I was very disappointed with the Miami family," he said. "I just did not like the way our laws were defied, the way our courts were defied." John Coatsworth, director of the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University, thinks public resentment over Elián will "hang over every discussion of Cuban-American relations from now until the embargo is lifted." That day is still far-off, but not nearly as far-off as it seemed less than one year ago. ■

North Korea opens up.

Open Sesame

By PETER MAASS

IN EARLY 1995, Tony Namkung received a phone call from a diplomat at the North Korean mission to the United Nations. Would it be possible, the diplomat asked, to arrange for the magician David Copperfield to perform in Pyongyang? Namkung, a resident scholar at the Atlantic Council, a Washington, D.C., think tank, was one of the few people in America who could be sure such a call was not a prank. He was on good terms with the North Koreans at the mission, often going out with them to dinner or movies and frequently serving as a conduit for messages between them and U.S. officials and politicians. He made a few calls and learned that Copperfield was performing his magic in Las Vegas, so he arranged for a few complimentary passes, booked several rooms at the MGM Grand, and flew to Vegas with two North Korean diplomats.

The North Koreans, bedazzled on their first visit to America's gambling capital, were delighted with the show and went backstage afterward to meet Copperfield (along the way, they bumped into Neil Sedaka). The man of secrets and the men from a country of secrets got along well; Copperfield said he would be glad to perform in Pyongyang. A few months later, Jonathan Hochwald, one of Copperfield's producers, went to North Korea to scope out the facilities. The North Koreans were so excited they talked about erecting a statue of Copperfield. "They really wanted to make it happen," Hochwald told me.

North Korea, in its bizarre way, was trying to open to the world. And it's still trying. Although the Copperfield deal eventually foundered over finances, now, after a flurry of unexpected diplomatic moves, the curtain is being raised in Pyongyang on an even more surprising act. North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Il, is scheduled to play host from June 12 to June 14 to South Korean President Kim Dae Jung, in the first inter-Korean summit. Both sides have much to gain. The North, its moribund economy devastated by floods and famine, desperately wants aid and investment from its one-time enemies. The prosperous South, many years distant from the rule of military hard-liners, hopes to overcome the tense division of the peninsula. All of which begs the question: Is North Korea serious about joining the community of peaceful nations? Or does the country simply want more aid to perpetuate its Stalinist, bomb-making ways?

American hawks say it's the latter. As proof, they cite recent history. In 1994, under then-President Kim Il Sung, North Korea nearly provoked a regional war by appearing to extract weapons-grade plutonium from its nuclear reactor, in violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It pulled back from the brink only after the United States, Japan, and South Korea bought it off with the promise of two new nuclear reactors and 500,000 tons of heating oil per year until the new plants came online. In 1995, hundreds of thousands of North Koreans began starving to death in a protracted famine. Kim Il Sung's successor, his son Kim Jong Il, who until then was known chiefly as a reclusive playboy, refused to allow foreign aid workers free access to the countryside and diverted some of the food aid to the army. In 1998, North Korea rocked the world again when it launched a three-stage missile, thus proving its ability to strike far beyond its shores. Last year Pyongyang officially agreed to refrain from further missile tests, but it's anyone's guess what's happening in its (literally) underground laboratories. Rather than breathe life into a dying rogue regime, the hawks want to tighten the noose.

HERE'S WHERE SUPPORTERS of engagement—including the U.S. State Department—have a strong counterargument. Backing North Korea's government into a corner might undermine it in the long run, but that could take many years, since the regime, which is so repressive that it lacks a dissident movement, has proved far more resilient than expected. Meanwhile, without economic carrots from the United States and its allies, Kim Jong Il's government will have every incentive to continue developing and selling to other countries and rogue groups its missile technology—the only thing it has that anyone would want to buy.

More importantly, note the engagement boosters, there is good reason to believe that Kim Jong Il *has* changed his tune—in other words, that there is a real chance for a more peaceful relationship with his government. In the early years of his rule, this argument goes, Kim Jong Il had only

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PETER MAASS, a former staff writer at *The Washington Post*, was based in Seoul for three years. He is author of *Love Thy Neighbor*, a memoir about covering the war in Bosnia.

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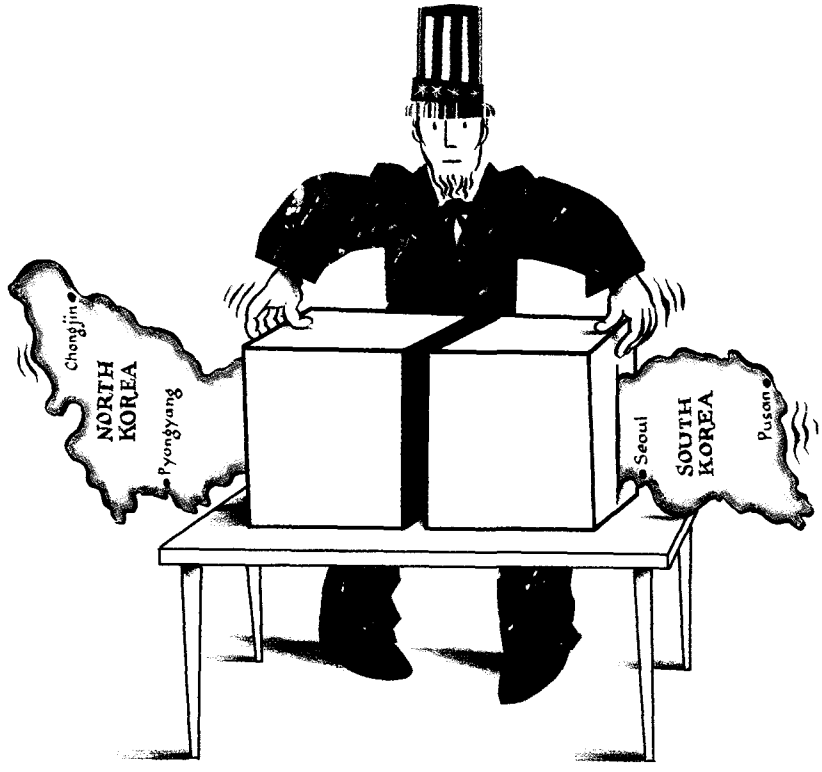
a weak grip on power, with few of his own people occupying key posts in the government and the military. Most Korea experts gave the younger Kim a year in office before his regime collapsed, perhaps in the manner of Ceauşescu's Romania. The famine made Kim's position more precarious, virtually ensuring he would not risk rocking the boat with a new policy of opening to the West.



MATTHEW MARTIN

But Kim has emerged from the famine firmly in charge and has begun taking some of the very steps the West has long called for. About 150 representatives of international governmental organizations have recently been allowed to set up camp in North Korea. In the past few months, Pyongyang has agreed to reestablish diplomatic relations with Italy and Australia. North Korea also wants to join ASEAN's Regional Forum and is involved in slow-moving talks with the United States and Japan on a range of issues, including missile proliferation, that stand in the way of diplomatic relations. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter has been carrying on a back-channel exchange of letters with Kim Jong Il. "They seem to have seen the light and are ready to get serious about trying to find a way of working with the South, with Japan and the U.S.," a senior U.S. official told me.

The North Koreans are likely motivated more by self-interest than by goodwill. Since taking office in 1998, South Korea's Kim Dae Jung has pursued a "sunshine policy" of increasing economic and cultural exchanges with North Korea in hopes of convincing the government that it has more to gain from engaging the West than from spurning it. For example, the North earns $1 billion a year in tourism revenue from Hyundai, which sends boatloads of South Koreans on closely supervised visits to North Korea's scenic Mount Kumgang. The best sign that Kim Jong Il has gotten the message is his agreement to meet with Kim Dae Jung at the summit. While no one is yet calling Kim Jong Il another Deng Xiaoping, he no longer appears to be a combination of Hugh Hefner and Dr. Evil.

This puts the United States in a delicate position. Although the Clinton administration has provided more than $200 million in annual aid to North Korea in recent years, until now it has steered clear of dramatic political moves, partly because it will win no political points for making nice with a regime understandably despised on Capitol Hill. But, if the summit goes well, the ball might soon be in the administration's court. The sort of economic aid North Korea desires can only come from international institutions like the Asian Development Bank or the World Bank. Of course, North Korea will need to agree to the financial transparency demanded by these lenders—which, if you buy the logic of those who support permanent normal trading relations with China, may promote political change. The administration, on the other hand, will need to decide whether to bite the political bullet at home and remove North Korea from its list of countries that sponsor terrorism—after all, the United States isn't in the practice of approving loans for states on that list—thus paving the way for full diplomatic relations.

Of course, rapprochement with North Korea is morally distasteful at best. But if the South Koreans—who have fewer illusions about the North than anyone in Washington—believe it is worth a try, America shouldn't stand in the way. Détente with Pyongyang is undoubtedly a risky policy, but the truth is, when you're dealing with a government like North Korea's, any policy is. ■

Bangkok Dispatch

On Faith

By JOSHUA KURLANTZICK

IT DIDN'T TAKE long for hysteria to set in. On April 24, an Islamic terrorist group called Abu Sayyaf abducted 21 people from a Malaysian island resort and took them to the lawless southern Philippines, where the group is fighting for a fundamentalist Islamic state. Within days, the press was issuing dire warnings that Southeast Asia was on the verge of being overrun by radical Islam. The *International Herald Tribune* ran a front-page article titled "An Asia [*sic*] Fear of Islamic

JOSHUA KURLANTZICK is Bangkok correspondent for Agence France-Presse.

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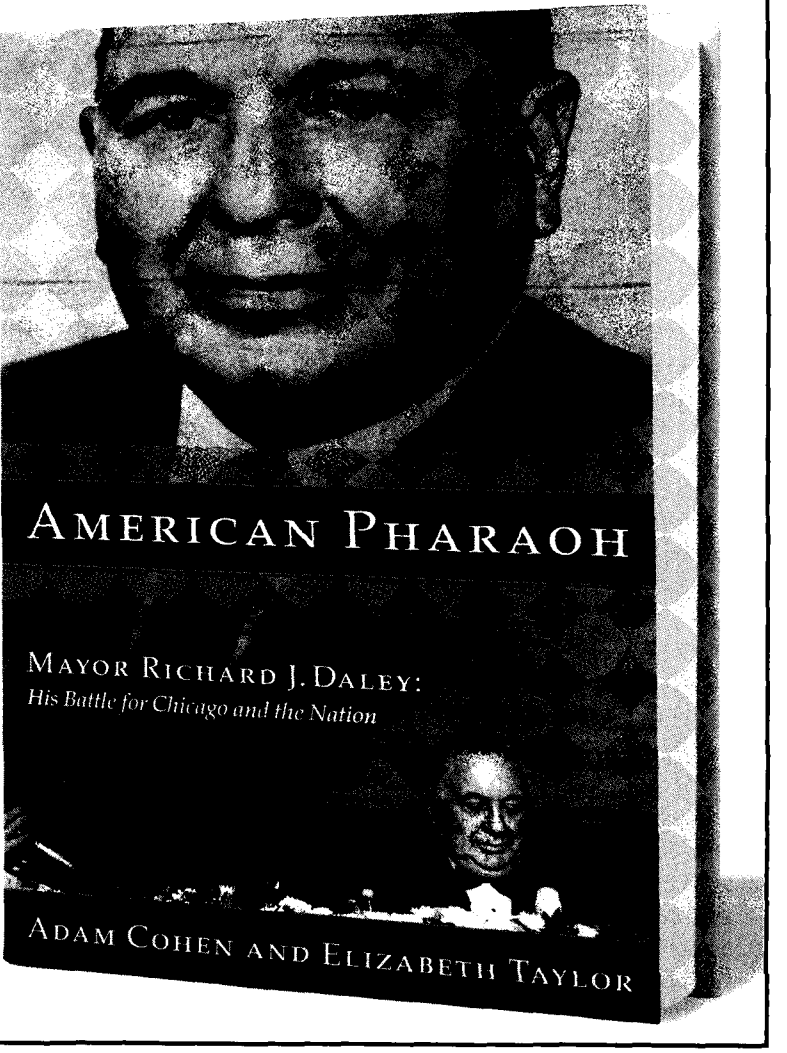

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Extremism" that highlighted "intensified concerns about the rise of Islamic extremism in Southeast Asia." Security "experts," according to the *Bangkok Post*'s Alan Dawson, argued that "a loose coalition of [Islamic] revolutionary organizations" was sweeping Southeast Asia. If we are right, these experts said, fundamentalism could shatter the region's nascent stability and destroy Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim state.

They are wrong. Islamic fundamentalism thrives on poverty and repression, and the rapidly developing countries of Southeast Asia are not fertile terrain. What's more, the Islam indigenous to the region bears little resemblance to the fanaticism present in some parts of Central Asia and the Middle East. Fundamentalist Islam is no more likely to sweep Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines than it was to sweep the southern Balkans, another region where the media warned of galloping Islamist hordes.

LIKE BOSNIA, SOUTHEAST ASIA boasts a relaxed brand of Islam that incorporates a host of pre-Islamic traditions. Islam arrived on the Malay Peninsula in the fifteenth century, but it never became the central force that it did elsewhere. Polls show that fewer than half of Malaysians and Indonesians consider themselves diligent Muslims. The Nahdatul Ulama, one of the largest Muslim social organizations in Java—the island that is home to 60 percent of Indonesia's 210 million people—has traditionally emphasized tolerance and pluralism. Even in the Philippines, where centuries of Catholic rule have fostered more of a siege mentality, there is little history of *ulamas*, or Muslim councils, imposing Islamic law (*sharia*). Indeed, the Muslim secessionists in the southern Philippines appear uncertain about whether they truly want an Islamic state based on *sharia* or just a separate Muslim-majority state similar to the one in Malaysia.

Economic desperation and political fury, it's true, can introduce radicalism into historically tolerant religious traditions. And some parts of the southern Philippines and northwestern Malaysia, as well as outlying Indonesian islands like Aceh, have not received their fair share of development—which is one reason fundamentalists have made inroads there. But the economies of Southeast Asia are growing again, and in recent months Malaysia and Indonesia have begun addressing inequalities in wealth among their provinces. Investment in Mindanao, a southern Philippine island with a large Muslim population, grew more than 28 percent last year.

In Southeast Asia, openness to the West still seems much more enticing than alienating. Speaking with city dwellers in Kuala Lumpur or Surabaya, the kinds of crowded urban centers that have bred fundamentalism in the Middle East, one hardly gets the feeling that residents are seeking an alternative to modernity. "Look at the lines at shopping centers ... and tell me people want a civilizational retreat," says a regional-affairs researcher at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University. "Materialism may be encroaching on traditional values, but in Southeast Asia many younger people welcome that change ... this is a region that wants to leap toward being developed."

And, unlike the regimes in Algeria and Egypt—which have attempted to crush Islamists, thereby increasing their prestige—Southeast Asian governments have co-opted Muslim radicals. A tolerant but deeply devout Muslim, Indonesian President Abdurraham Wahid has helped to moderate once-strident politicians like Amien Rais, a former firebrand who has softened his rhetoric since becoming chairman of the upper house of parliament. Though Indonesia remains racked by violence, Wahid has promised Aceh significant autonomy. And, because some in Aceh believe Wahid is serious about devolving power and because the region's strict Muslim separatists have alienated the populace by dispensing arbitrary justice in regions they control, enthusiasm for a free, Islamist Aceh has recently waned.

In Malaysia, President Mahathir Mohamad has similarly taken the wind out of Islamist sails. In the early '80s, the Islamic PAS gained a following among people left out of the country's economic boom. In response, Mahathir's ruling United Malays National Organization (UMNO) allowed Islamists to contest elections and invited Islamic leaders, including future Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, into the government. Once in government, PAS moved to the center, toning down its calls for the "Islamization" of Malaysia. After Anwar was sacked in September 1998, PAS joined forces with an ethnic Chinese opposition party and a moderate new movement, led by Anwar's wife, to present a united front against the government. PAS tripled its representation in parliament in the November 1999 elections, but its new young backers were motivated by hostility toward Mahathir, not religious fervor. After the election, when PAS tried to implement tax statutes based on *sharia*, its coalition partners voiced concerns about discrimination against non-Muslims, and PAS backed down.

BUT DON'T TAKE my word for it; Muslim fundamentalists in the Middle East also doubt their cause has much of a future in Southeast Asia. The Philippine military alleges that its country's Muslim rebels receive "training, logistics, expertise, and access to the international terrorist network" and give foreign militants "sanctuary and other forms of assistance." Radical Filipino Muslims harbored Ramzi Yousef, the World Trade Center bomber, and a few Filipinos have studied in religious schools in Afghanistan. But Middle East intelligence sources believe ties between Islamists in Southeast Asia and the Middle East are limited and that Muslim radicals in the Arab world don't think militant Islam has much potential in Southeast Asia. The number of Southeast Asians studying in Middle Eastern religious schools or sharing expertise with radical Middle Eastern groups, they argue, is small and unlikely to rise anytime soon.

Not that Islam doesn't pose a threat to Southeast Asia. It does—an irrational fear of it could overshadow legitimate security concerns, such as China's desire to dominate the region and Indonesia's potential descent into not Islamism but anarchy and dissolution. If those problems are not addressed, Southeast Asia could become scarier than even the spinners of doomsday fundamentalist scenarios imagine. ■

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[1]Source: Government Accounting Office; Report to the Honorable Charles B. Rangel, House of Representatives, Law Enforcement: Information on Drug-Related Police Corruption, Washington, DC: USGPO (1998 May).

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Campaign Journal

Boy on the Bus

By MICHELLE COTTLE

BUFFALO, NEW YORK

IT WAS THE biggest event of Representative Rick Lazio's political life, and all anyone could talk about was the lip. Just one day before the fresh-faced Long Island Republican was to be officially tapped as his party's Senate nominee at the state GOP convention here, he had fallen flat on his face during a Memorial Day parade—in his home district, no less—and split his lip wide open. The humiliating incident had made *The New York Times* (with an accompanying photo), and now it seemed all of Buffalo was buzzing about it. The aggressively coiffed dames at the Women for Lazio luncheon wanted to ask him about it. The speakers at the afternoon's nominating meeting cracked jokes about it. And the media jackals spent the entire day sniggering about it. Lazio kept up a brave front, grinning tirelessly (perhaps even painfully) and poking gentle fun at his misfortune. But the situation was tragic, really—and not just because he looked like the victim of a collagen injection gone wrong.

After all, New York's Republican bigwigs had carefully scripted the May 30 nominating convention to ensure nothing would steal Lazio's thunder as he set forth to crush Hillary Clinton. Governor George Pataki was on hand to praise Lazio to the sky. New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani wasn't, graciously ceding the spotlight. Each speaker waxed rhapsodic about Lazio's accomplishments and awesome leadership ability. And Lazio strategist Mike Murphy, fresh from Arizona Senator John McCain's presidential run, arranged for his new candidate to launch a McCain-style "meet the masses" bus tour—dubbed the "Mainstream Express"—at a post-nomination rally. Everything was in place to make sure nothing and no one overshadowed Rick Lazio on his big day. And then the candidate's lip stole the show.

DREW FRIEDMAN

As it turns out, the lip may have been an omen of things to come. There's nothing really wrong with Lazio. He's good-looking, energetic, articulate, likable, and moderate. In a normal state in a normal year, he'd be a strong presence. But he's running in the biggest Senate race in human history: his opponent is Goliath in a pantsuit, his supporters are nationally known heavyweights, his media adviser is a media star, and he's trailed by a pack of journalists the size of East Islip. In short, Lazio is perennially in danger of being upstaged by his supporting cast. It doesn't help that, despite a sprinkling of gray hair, the baby-faced congressman appears closer to 22 than 42. And, with perky blond wife Pat by his side, Lazio looks less like a Senate candidate than a high school quarterback basking in the adulation of his classmates. He just seems so golly-gee glad to be there. At any moment, you expect Pat to whip out her pom-poms and launch into a slightly altered chorus of that insidiously catchy 1980s pop hit by Toni Basil: "Oh, Ricky, you're so fine, you're so fine you blow my mind. Hey, Ricky! [bom bom] Hey, Ricky!" The overall effect is sweet but not exactly imposing.

Democrats are already gloating about the gap in stature between Lazio and the first lady, but that's only one of the stature gaps Little Ricky has to worry about. Closer to home, he will need to watch the shadow of Mike Murphy. Obviously, the hope is that Murphy can work the same magic on Lazio that he has been credited (at times by Murphy himself) with working for the McCain campaign. But the mediagenic Murphy has developed a nasty reputation for occasionally forgetting who is supposed to be the star of the races he orchestrates. (Hint: It's the candidate.) And, while the larger-than-life McCain had no trouble holding his own against The Mike Murphy Show, Little Ricky may find it more difficult.

Then there's Pataki, the guy Republicans really hoped would jump into the Senate fray when Rudy backed out. Pataki sees Lazio as his protégé and presumably wouldn't do anything to undermine his political fortunes. But, when the taller, older, more accomplished Pataki appears onstage with Lazio, the contrast isn't flattering. At the post-convention rally, as Lazio rambled on about vision and mission and compassion, Pataki stood beaming like a proud father—making Little Ricky look even more like someone's rambunctious teenage son.

Finally, Lazio will need to banish the ghost of Giuliani. As with Hillary Clinton, even those who loathe the mayor admit

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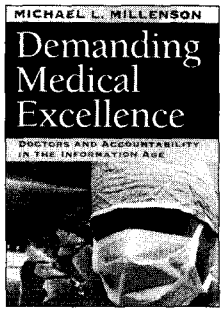

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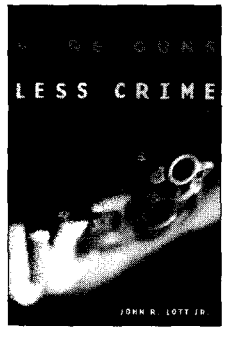

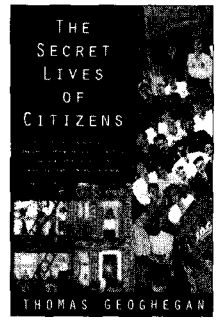

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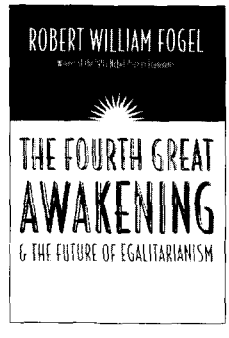

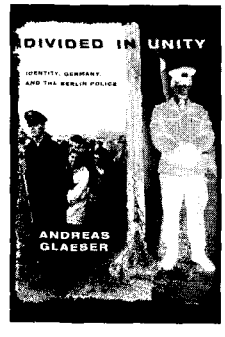

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he is a force. By contrast, even Lazio's supporters admit he's not. In fact, they practically boast about his vanilla personality, arguing that it will keep the spotlight on Hillary's weaknesses. They are particularly excited about his low profile in the black community, where, in contrast to the confrontational Giuliani, they hope he can come off as so nondescript that Harlem will sleep through Election Day. But not making a strong impression on the voters is a risky goal for a campaign to pursue, and the media, in particular, does not generally equate bland with wonderful. "How different this would be if Giuliani were here," one reporter sighed during the Women for Lazio luncheon.

In fact, even the ultrasympathetic crowd in Buffalo seemed underwhelmed. First, the candidate entered the ballroom to the theme music from *Rocky*—undoubtedly meant to highlight Lazio's scrappy underdog status but also another unfortunate reminder of his busted lip. Then he launched into his standard speech about uniting people, keeping the world safe from liberals—and, of course, how fabulous it is to be a 100 percent New Yorker. (You can bet he had that lip sewn up by an Empire State native.) It didn't take long for the audience to tune out. People were yawning and rubbing their eyes. One old guy in the second row kept nodding off. And steadily, over in the media section, the noise began to grow as the TV correspondents went ahead with their live shots—loudly, and just a few feet from the stage. Even Lazio began to look a little discombobulated as the talking heads droned on and on, louder and louder. Finally, the audience snapped back to attention and began angrily shushing the journalists, then launched into a perfunctory chant of "We want Rick! We want Rick!"

The scene at Dunn Tire ballpark, where Lazio held his post-nomination rally, was even less electric. Dozens of people huddled together in a seemingly endless food line. Men in dark-blue suits slouched over picnic tables, scarfing down hot dogs and burgers. At the far end of the party, next to another small stage, a massive black-velvet curtain was strung up behind a low white barricade. "That must be it," someone gestured, "the Mainstream Express." Sure enough, through a crack in the curtain you could see the proud white lettering across the vehicle's windshield. Still, when word came that the Lazios were in the park, and the event staff tried to herd folks away from the food line toward the curtain, they were largely ignored. People were more interested in their burgers and beer.

Eventually, the crowd perked up enough to cheer and shake pom-poms as the Lazios and Pataki took to the small stage behind center field. Candidate Lazio made another little speech; then the sound system burst forth in song, fireworks exploded, and the velvet curtain fell, revealing the Mainstream Express in all its green-, gold-, and maroon-striped glory. Honking to clear a path, the magic bus edged its way out from behind the barricade. Slowly, clasping hands every half-step of the way, Lazio, his wife, and Pataki inched toward the vehicle. And, with one final handshake, the candidate was swallowed up by the Mainstream Express. The golden motorcoach glittered as it pulled away into the sunset, but Rick Lazio, waving from one of its open windows, just grew harder and harder to see. ■

Sexual harassment: a solution.

Fall of Private Man

By JEFFREY ROSEN

IF YOU HAVE been feeling closely scrutinized at work lately, you are not alone. The most recent study of electronic monitoring in the workplace, conducted earlier this year by the American Management Association, found that more than half of the large U.S. firms surveyed monitor the Internet activity of their employees. Two-thirds monitor e-mail messages, computer files, or telephone conversations, up from 35 percent three years ago. The companies gave several reasons for these intrusions, including concerns about employee performance and productivity. But there was another, perhaps less obvious, reason: sexual harassment. "Employees who are unwittingly exposed to offensive graphic material on colleagues' computer screens may charge a hostile workplace environment," the AMA survey notes. They may do so because the Supreme Court's definition of sexual harassment is vague. It includes not only sexual extortion—this is known as "quid pro quo" harassment, as in, "Sleep with me or you're fired"—but also a more ambiguous category known as "hostile environment" harassment. It's hard to know in advance what kind of environment a jury might consider hostile, and employers don't want to find out the hard way. So they protect themselves by monitoring, and sometimes punishing, e-mailing and Web-browsing that employees thought was private.

By itself, of course, a single sexually explicit e-mail message or practical joke isn't sufficiently "severe or pervasive" to render the environment hostile, according to the Supreme Court. But a pattern of comments or jokes from different employees can create a hostile environment. As a result, even the most liberal employers are adopting draconian monitoring policies. "These systems may not be used to create, transmit, or receive any offensive or disruptive messages," reads the Internet policy recently adopted by *The Village Voice*. "Among those that are considered offensive are any messages

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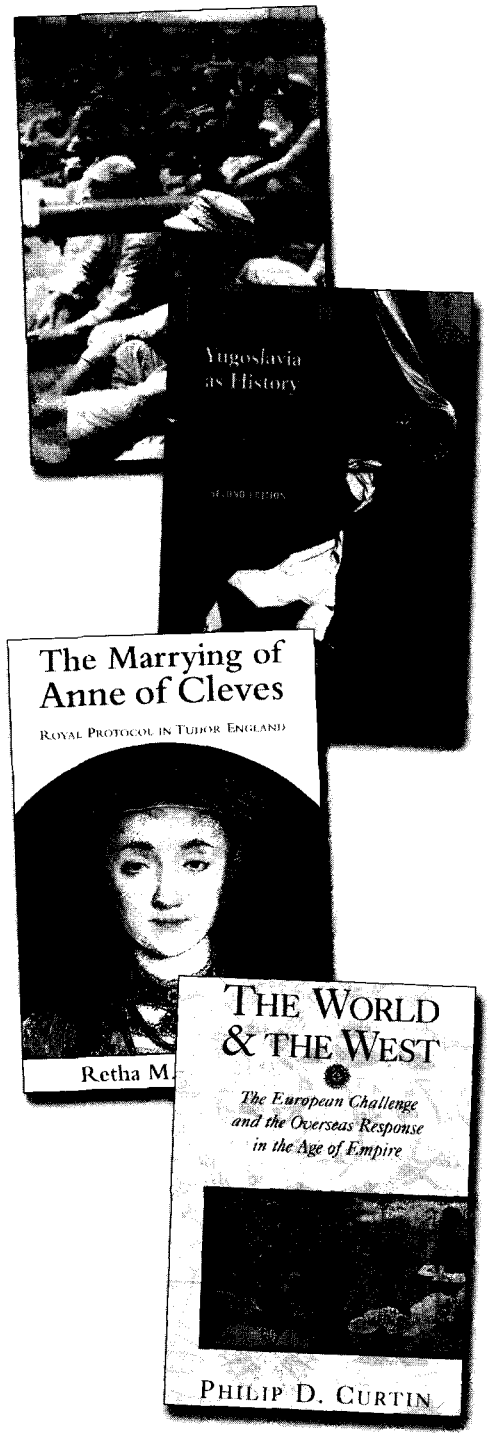

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that contain sexual implications or jokes; messages that comment offensively on a person's race, sex, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or religion; messages that defame others; and messages that invade a person's privacy." In an eloquent denunciation of the policy, columnist Nat Hentoff asked, "As for that last phrase, doesn't the *Voice* now do precisely that?"

The well-intentioned campaign against sexual harassment has threatened privacy offline as well. On several prominent occasions, harassment law has been used to scrutinize consensual sexual behavior. Merely by accusing Bill Clinton of an unwanted advance, Paula Jones was able to violate not only his privacy but also that of Monica Lewinsky, who was forced to describe her own consensual sexual activities under oath. Lewinsky's biography, *Monica's Story*, reports that "Monica felt a brooding sense of outrage that Paula Jones's freedom to sue the President for money should take precedence over her right to privacy."

Something has gone wrong in the law of sexual harassment. A jurisprudence originally designed to protect privacy and dignity is inadvertently invading privacy and dignity. There is, however, a solution that would retain the important benefits of harassment law while avoiding its debilitating side effects. It lies in abandoning the hostile-environment test and returning to the text of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which pledges that Americans should not have decisions about their livelihood turn on their gender. Any speech or conduct that affects an employee's professional status because of sex is, and clearly should be, forbidden by law. But speech and conduct that some employees may find offensive but that has no tangible consequences for employment should be recognized for what it is: not a form of gender discrimination but an invasion of the offended person's privacy. By reconceiving harassment, the law could protect people's legitimate rights without imposing a cure as dangerous as the disease.

PHOTOFEST

How can an offensive comment or joke or glance in the workplace invade someone's privacy? In a book from 1963 called *Behavior in Public Places*, the sociologist Erving Goffman described the subtle and complicated range of expressions, glances, and signals we use either to make ourselves accessible to other people in face-to-face interactions or to maintain boundaries of reserve. Based in part on studies of etiquette manuals, Goffman argued that all of us rely instinctively on a richly calibrated range of "involvement shields" that regulate our encounters with strangers, acquaintances, and intimate friends. In different social settings, we maintain boundaries of reticence that other people are forbidden to cross without mutually negotiated consent.

In America today, sexual-harassment codes have become an imperfect substitute for etiquette manuals in regulating face-to-face interactions. Consider the following list of potential sexual-harassment infractions at a typical state university:

> Making sexual innuendoes; turning work discussions to sexual topics; telling sexual jokes or stories; asking about sexual preferences or history; asking personal questions about a person's social or sexual life; making sexual comments about a person's clothing, body, or looks; repeatedly asking out a person who is not interested; telling lies or spreading rumors about a person's sex life. Looking a person up and down (elevator eyes); blocking a person's path; displaying sexual or derogatory comments about men/women on coffee mugs, clothing, and so on; making facial expressions such as winking, throwing kisses; making sexual gestures with hands and/or body movements; giving letters, gifts, and/or materials of a sexual nature; invading a person's body space by standing closer than appropriate or necessary.

Many of the liberties on this remarkable list, when considered in isolation, are better conceived as invasions of privacy than as examples of gender discrimination. A single case of "elevator eyes," for example, in which one person lasciviously looks another up and down, is hard to think of as a form of discrimination that limits a woman's professional opportunities on the basis of gender. But it is by no means absurd to conceive of leering as an invasion of privacy. Indeed, Goffman emphasizes the particular difficulty of maintaining civil inattention in small spaces such as railway cars or, as it happens, elevators. He quotes a charming etiquette guide from the 1950s by Cornelia Otis Skinner, called *Where to Look*, which identifies the modern elevator as a particularly trying example of a "where to look situation," in which "any mutual exchange of glance on the part of the occupants would add almost a touch of lewdness to such already over-cozy sardine formation."

To be looked up and down by strangers can be an indignity, although in most cases a minor one. To be looked up and down by your boss may be a more serious indignity. The problem is that American law has traditionally been reluctant to punish offenses against individual honor or dignity: this is why the early architects of harassment law had to define workplace offenses as gender discrimination. "Our system," Louis Brandeis and Samuel D. Warren wrote wistfully in 1890, in their famous article on the right to privacy, "does not afford a remedy even for mental suffering which results from mere contumely and insult, from an intentional and unwarranted violation of the 'honor' of another."

Other legal systems, whose privacy protections are less rooted in ideas of private property, have less trouble describing the injury that results when people are observed against

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their will. Jewish law, for example, has developed a remarkable doctrine around the concept of *hezzek re'iyyah*, which means "the injury caused by seeing." Jewish law protects neighbors not only from unwanted observation but also from the possibility of being observed. Thus, if your neighbor constructs a window that overlooks your home or courtyard, you are entitled to an injunction that not only prohibits him from observing you through the window but also orders the window to be removed. From its earliest days, Jewish law recognized that it is not only surveillance itself but also uncertainty about whether or not we are being observed that inhibits us from speaking and acting freely in private places. "Even the smallest intrusion by the unwanted gaze into private space causes damage," medieval authorities wrote, "because the injury caused by seeing cannot be measured."

This notion of the unwanted gaze helps us understand why some breaches of social boundaries that are currently considered sexual harassment are better defined as invasions of privacy. By treating a woman merely as a sex object and allowing a single aspect of her identity—her appearance—to eclipse all other aspects, an unwanted gaze wrenches her out of context in the same way Monica Lewinsky was wrenched out of context by the exposure of her bookstore receipts and undeleted e-mail messages. In the 1970s, feminist film critics wrote about the objectifying quality of the "male gaze" in popular movies, which, in their view, reduced women to eroticized body parts fit for male ogling. These critics are correct when they describe the indignity of being looked at in a way that substitutes a part of a woman's body for the whole of her personality. But that indignity is more precisely described not as gender discrimination but as an invasion of privacy.

In arguing that certain sexual advances or gazes may invade privacy, I don't mean to deny that they might also be viewed as a form of gender discrimination. In the workplace, even relatively trivial forms of sexualization may impede women's progress and make it harder, in subtle ways, for them to function as professionals. (An offense against dignity can also become an offense against equality when it occurs in a professional context.) But, as Lewinsky's protests show, views about consensual sexual behavior and expression are tremendously varied, and forcing people to justify their own sexual choices in public, as the hostile-environment test often does, can be appalling. Treating this behavior as an invasion of privacy rather than as gender discrimination would protect private spaces for negotiating legitimately different views of the good life, freeing people from the constant burden of justifying their differences.

HOW DID OFFENSES against personal dignity in the workplace become conceived as sex discrimination rather than as invasions of privacy? The paradox arose in a strain of feminist theory that stressed the connection between male desire and male dominance. In *Sexual Harassment of Working Women: A Case of Sex Discrimination*, published in 1979, Catharine MacKinnon insisted that some sexual expression might be viewed as inherently discriminatory, because heterosexual relations were the means by which male domination and female subordination were enforced. The great innovation of MacKinnon's book was to identify a new category of sexual harassment that didn't require evidence of physical contact, explicit threats, or tangible job consequences. She described this as situations where sexualized comments or displays in the workplace made the "work environment unbearable."

A year after the publication of MacKinnon's book, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued guidelines defining sexual harassment to include not only quid pro quo threats but also "verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" that has "the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment." And in 1986, in the landmark *Meritor* case, the Supreme Court unanimously endorsed the EEOC's hostile-environment test. The case involved a bank teller whose supervisor repeatedly pressured her for sex and eventually raped her. The Supreme Court could have said the supervisor's constant sexual demands clearly changed the terms and conditions of the teller's employment because of sex—an obvious violation of the text of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Instead, Chief Justice William Rehnquist departed from the text of Title VII, holding that the supervisor had discriminated by creating a hostile and offensive working environment. In cases like *Roe* v. *Wade*, in which the Supreme Court declared a constitutional right to privacy, the justices used privacy as a clumsy metaphor for rights of reproductive choice that the Court would later reconceive as an aspect of gender equality. By contrast, in *Meritor*, the justices said it was a form of gender discrimination to commit offenses against personal dignity in the workplace that are better conceived as invasions of privacy.

The hostile-environment test transformed the workplace by blurring the boundaries between the public and private spheres. By allowing women (or men) to complain about any sexually oriented speech or conduct they found hostile or offensive, the new test allowed aggrieved coworkers to object to overheard jokes, e-mail messages, suggestive pictures, or even consensual flirtation on the part of their colleagues, even if the conduct wasn't considered offensive by the men and women directly involved. And, unlike quid pro quo harassment, a hostile environment doesn't require proof of economic or even psychological injury. While under quid pro quo harassment only women who suffered tangible harm could sue, under the hostile-environment theory, the listener's perception of the "hostility" or "offensiveness" of the speech became the test of legal harm. This ambiguity is why prudent employers began to monitor private speech and conduct to avoid any incident that might conceivably give offense.

WHAT WOULD THE world look like if the hostile-environment test were abandoned? Quid pro quo harassment would still be prohibited. Title VII makes it illegal "to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's ... sex." The courts long ago abandoned the idea that there was any difference under Title VII between discrimination based on

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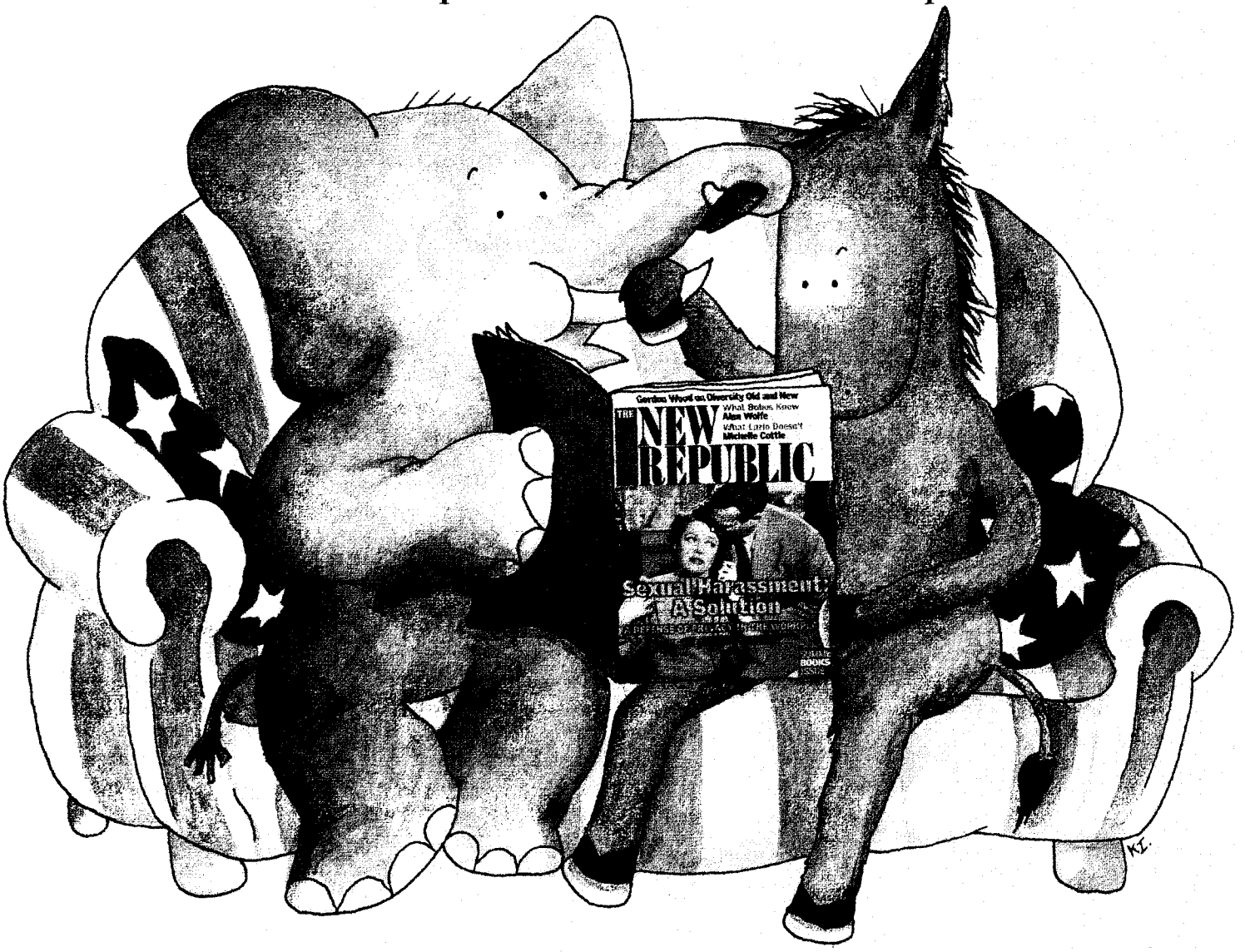

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gender and discrimination based on sex. And there is no doubt that implicit or explicit threats to fire someone for failure to submit to sexual demands is a form of discrimination in the terms of employment "because of... sex."

Similarly, pervasive gender-based animosity, or differential treatment of women based on stereotypical views about their abilities, would clearly change the terms of employment and thus constitute discrimination based on gender. The often overlooked second sentence of the relevant section of Title VII makes it illegal to "limit, segregate, or classify" employees in a way that tends to "deprive any individual employee of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his [or her] status as an employee because of... sex." This clearly covers the gauntlets, seemingly more common in blue-collar professions, in which women endure a daily pattern of sexist taunts and abuse. It also covers subtler manifestations of sexist treatment, in which women's professional opportunities are limited and their professional abilities belittled because of the discriminatory attitudes of male employers.

That leaves only one category of sexual harassment that might be less closely regulated if the hostile-environment test were abandoned: sexual speech and conduct that can't plausibly be characterized as sex discrimination. This includes certain unwanted advances, suggestive looks and gestures, sexual joking and teasing, and the display of sexually explicit material—in cases where these behaviors carry no threat of retaliation, don't change the terms of employment, and don't deprive an individual of employment opportunities because of sex but are nevertheless potentially offensive. There is clearly room for vigorous debate about how much speech and conduct this category includes. Sexual harassment is highly dependent on context: a series of unwanted requests for dates from a supervisor might change the terms of employment in a discriminatory way, while a series of unwanted requests for dates from a coworker might not. Similarly, sexist taunts from a supervisor might affect the professional status of a female employee in a way that vulgar jokes about that same woman by two male colleagues might not. But if the hostile-environment test were abandoned, this debate about which speech and conduct changes the terms of employment would be guided by the text of Title VII itself. And focusing on whether someone was discriminated against rather than whether someone was offended would make employers less likely to ban private communications out of fear that a third party might take offense.

A NEW GENERATION of feminist scholars is beginning to recognize the analytical awkwardness of conceiving hostile-environment sexual harassment exclusively as a form of gender discrimination. In a powerful article last year in *The Georgetown Law Journal*, Rosa Ehrenreich argued that sexual harassment should be understood as an injury to dignity. The harms that hostile-environment sexual harassment inflicts, Ehrenreich argued, are indignity and humiliation, and they therefore are better understood not simply as gender discrimination but as something like what the law calls a tort—a civil injury inflicted by one individual upon another.

Tort law is the area of our legal system that gives people remedies against those who have transgressed social norms in especially outrageous ways. But in harassment cases that don't involve professional consequences, what is the social norm being transgressed? It is, in my view, privacy: in particular, the ability to control the conditions under which we make ourselves socially accessible to others. In these cases, privacy law is better equipped than gender-discrimination law to distinguish truly egregious violations, which should be illegal, from merely offensive behavior, which should not. The most intentionally hurtful behavior can be regulated by the intentional torts: battery, assault, false imprisonment, and outrage. But many incidents of sexual harassment are not clearly intended to humiliate, and they look more like boorish and insensitive advances pressed despite ambiguous warnings. In this gray area, invasion-of-privacy law is especially clarifying. One of the torts of invasion of privacy forbids intrusions on seclusion: "One who intentionally intrudes, physically or otherwise, upon the solitude or seclusion of another or his private affairs or concerns is subject to liability to the other for invasion of his privacy, if the intrusion would be highly offensive to a reasonable person."

THE INTRUSION-ON-SECLUSION tort effectively identifies the injury that results from unwanted advances and other trespasses on personal honor. Courts in intrusion-on-seclusion cases, like courts in hostile-environment harassment cases, have not insisted on proof of serious psychological injury or mental distress. This makes little sense if harassment is conceived of as a workplace injury, which usually requires proof of adverse professional consequences, but it makes perfect sense if harassment is conceived of as an offense against dignity. Alabama is not generally regarded as being at the vanguard of civil rights; but, in a far-reaching decision, the Alabama Supreme Court held in 1983 that a series of repeated sexual demands by a supervisor might constitute an intrusion on seclusion. Rejecting the argument that such an intrusion has to be a physical invasion of a private space, like the home, the court held that, even in the workplace, there is an "emotional sanctum" that is entitled to the same expectations of privacy as our physical environment.

Using invasion-of-privacy law, rather than the hostile-environment test, to regulate offensive speech that has no professional consequences would retain the benefits of current harassment law while avoiding its inadvertent side effects. It would encourage companies to intervene in serious cases, but it would reduce the pressure they now feel to monitor private speech and conduct that wouldn't ordinarily be brought to their attention. That's partly because courts have been more reluctant to hold businesses (as opposed to the offending individuals) liable in privacy suits than in hostile-environment suits. In Alabama, employers are only liable for intentional torts committed by their employees if they know about the conduct, know it constitutes an illegal invasion of privacy, and fail to stop it.

The intrusion-on-seclusion tort has also proved more effective than the hostile-environment test in distinguishing serious violations of privacy from unfortunate misunder-

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standings. The requirement that the indignity must cause "outrage or cause mental suffering, shame, or humiliation to a person of ordinary sensibilities" sets the bar high enough so that relatively trivial indignities are no longer actionable. And invasion-of-privacy law focuses on speech targeted at a particular woman that has the purpose or effect of humiliating her—as opposed to speech that inadvertently offends third parties.

Most important of all, using tort law, rather than the hostile-environment test, to regulate offensive but nondiscriminatory speech and conduct would make it easier for employers to reconstruct private spaces in which employees could express themselves without fear of being observed. As Goffman has noted, individuals, like actors in a theater, need backstage areas where they can take off their public masks, collect themselves, and relieve the tensions that are an inevitable part of public performance. By definition, a backstage area is a place of retreat from social norms—a place where workers can be lustful, sloppy, indiscreet, or playful, form intimate bonds, and indulge in behavior that would be inappropriate if practiced in more formal areas of the workplace. In a company where men vastly outnumber women, a place where men relax among themselves—making vulgar jokes, talking about women, and engaging in the ordinary rituals of male bonding—may be perceived by women as threatening and discriminatory. When women are in the majority, the backstage area may seem inhospitable to men. But, although one sex's backstage behavior may be another's hostile environment, social remedies are better than legal ones when the offense is not severe and the terms of employment are not clearly affected. The law is a blunderbuss rather than a scalpel, and the effort to provide legal remedies for relatively minor offenses, as the hostile-environment test now does, may inadvertently destroy the backstage enclaves that Goffman shows to be so important.

Consider how the law of privacy, as opposed to the law of gender discrimination, would have responded to the case of Bill Clinton and Paula Jones. On public streets and in the workplace, we all rightly expect we won't be bothered by sexual overtures unless we've clearly indicated, by our words, gestures, and glances, that the overtures will be reciprocated. Certain spaces—hotel bars, cocktail lounges, even some supermarkets—have traditionally been seen as "open places" where sexual advances are considered permissible rather than an invasion of privacy. The hotel room to which Jones allegedly repaired after allegedly being told by a state trooper that she made Governor Clinton's "knees knock" might be seen in the same vein. But, even in a hotel room, a sexual advance can invade the recipient's expectations of privacy when it is disproportionate to the kind of attention she has invited. Jones may have gone to the hotel room prepared to flirt with Clinton, but by all indications she was alarmed and discomfited when, without warning, he allegedly exposed himself to her. If Clinton did what Jones accused him of doing, he insulted her and invaded her privacy.

Furthermore, if Jones had sued Clinton for invasion of privacy rather than sex discrimination, the collateral invasions of the privacy of innocent third parties, such as Lewinsky, might have largely been avoided. In a hypothetical invasion-of-privacy suit, the discovery process would have focused on Clinton's treatment of Jones rather than his treatment of all the women to whom he had made previous sexual advances. Because the invasion-of-privacy tort, unlike the law of sexual harassment, focuses on particular encounters rather than patterns of behavior, a sensitive judge would have more discretion to exclude invasive evidence without making it impossible for Jones to argue her case. And, whether or not Jones ultimately won, an invasion-of-privacy suit would have focused on the indignity she suffered, which was obvious, rather than its effect on her employment status, which was negligible.

There are many acceptable responses to inappropriate speech and conduct in the workplace, from talking quietly to the offender to applying formal discipline. Indeed, in a pluralistic society, different employers should be allowed to protect privacy in different ways: the military should be free to monitor e-mail and forbid fraternization; universities might regulate conduct between professors and students but refuse to regulate speech under any circumstances; and different corporations could strike different balances, depending on the nature of their product and the kind of employees they hope to attract. This flexibility, in which privacy is enforced primarily through social disapproval backed by voluntary choices made by employers, is something today's sexual-harassment law refuses to allow.

Anyone who has joined the workforce in the past generation has benefited from the heightened sensitivity to sexual harassment, sensitivity that has helped men and women work together with greater civility, equality, and mutual respect. The integration of women into the workforce is the most important social change of the postwar era; and the transformation of social norms so that people who inevitably find themselves attracted to each other can interact as professionals is no small achievement. And, if the strong medicine of harassment law has restored a Victorian caution to the way ladies and gentlemen interact at work, that is hardly a bad thing.

But, while the hostile-environment test may have been necessary when white-collar workplaces were more sexually segregated and less sexually sophisticated than they are today, its inadvertent side effects now threaten the boundaries between the public and private spheres. It is wrong, in a liberal society, that sexual expression without tangible employment consequences—overheard jokes, private e-mail, and consensual affairs between colleagues—should be monitored by employers and punished by the state. When speech or conduct changes the conditions of employment, the answer is anti-discrimination law. But, in less extreme cases, invasion-of-privacy law is better suited than the hostile-environment test to distinguish speech that is merely offensive from speech invasive enough to be illegal. By returning to the text of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the courts could help rebuild private enclaves in public places for people to relax, to reveal different sides of themselves in different contexts, to misjudge each other—in short, to be human. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Some History, Some Hysterics

István Szabó, one of the best Hungarian directors, has always been interested in history. "I like best to tell the story of a historical experience," he said some years ago, "what happens to human fate, to the human soul in the struggle for everyday security, for being able to go on living . . . Maybe films help people to become more interested in other people, to conquer prejudices, to grow fond of strange faces. Films may help people to identify with others, and that eases loneliness." In another director this view might sound naïve, even consciously so, but Szabó has supported it in his long career, especially in his best-known films, *Mephisto* and *Colonel Redl*, and it is the absolute core of his new three-hour film, **Sunshine** (Paramount Classics).

The story is by Szabó, the screenplay by Szabó and the American playwright Israel Horovitz, who presumably was needed because the film was made in English. *Sunshine* was conceived like a family-chronicle novel. Set mostly in Budapest, it follows a Hungarian Jewish family named Sonnenschein (Sunshine) from the late nineteenth century until relatively recent times, from the Austro-Hungarian Empire through World War I, the death of Franz Josef, the postwar arrival of the Communist Béla Kun, his quick departure, the arrival of the reactionary Admiral Horthy, then on through World War II, the return of communism, the Soviet intervention in 1956, and some matters thereafter. These events take place off-camera to a great degree and are registered through the Sonnenschein family. Even when Szabó uses newsreel clips, he contrives sometimes to include a Sonnenschein in them. Or a Sors. The non-Jewish name Sors is adopted legally by the descendants of the patriarch in the hope—later blasted—of assimilation.

The family fortune, considerable at the start, derives from a tonic called Sonnenschein, whose formula is kept secret even from most of the family. It becomes a symbol that binds them together, rather than a continuing family business, since the young men go into other professions. (One of them even becomes the star of the Olympic fencing team.) Sonnenschein fortunes fall and rise, as politics alter, as anti-Semitism flourishes or fades, as the tonic—the talisman that was to save them—doesn't. (The loss of the secret formula at the end is something like the loss of Rosebud in *Citizen Kane*.) Two themes dominate: the petty strength of individuals against the tides of history and, more specifically, the futility, the ignobility, of Jewish attempts to escape Jewishness. (A quite different subject from the loyalty of Jews to the country in which they live.)

I dim this film's splendor if I make it sound like a history lesson. On the other hand, the splendor doesn't make the narrative fresh. Very little of what happens in *Sunshine* will come as news, political or personal, to anyone who knows anything about the twentieth century, and since Szabó's point surely was (as his credo states) to enlarge us through this historical gauntlet, in this respect the film falters.

But—and what a dazzling antithesis it is in this case—Szabó is a master director who has the ability, something like David Lean, to convey the flow of history, to dramatize it, not only with panorama but with individuation. In *Sunshine*, even a love scene or an interview in an office seems to occur within the giant course of history.

Then there is the visual texture. With the aid of Lajos Koltai, his longtime cinematographer, Szabo *employs* Budapest. A palace, a street, a courthouse, an opera house, a railway station, a café—all are summoned to enhance the film. The interiors of homes have the rich gravy warmth of luxe turn-of-the-century European apartments, as if the occupants were living in the aroma of goulash and loving it. The clothes, men's and women's, delight with their almost humorous luxury. The score by Maurice Jarre, which makes considerable use of Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasy, rolls the film along.

The cast? Not a cast but an honor roll. David de Keyser, who was the old man in *The Designated Mourner*, plays the head of the Sonnenschein family at the start, with his father's portrait hanging behind him, and provides the base from which the story proceeds. His wife, Miriam Margolyes, is a high-blood-pressure case. One of their sons, a political radical, is James Frain (Barenboim in *Hilary and Jackie*), who breathes fire. To balance him, there is a conservative son played by Ralph Fiennes, and Fiennes goes on through the film to play his own son (the fencer) and grandson (a Stalinist). He gives all three men the reality that comes, in a good actor, from imaginary transubstantiation. Jennifer Ehle, an enchantress, plays Valerie, the cousin whom the first Fiennes marries, and Ehle's mother, Rosemary Harris, plainly the source of the Ehle enchantment, plays Valerie in her later years. (Much like the daughter-mother casting of Joely Richardson and Vanessa Redgrave in *Wetherby*.) A deep bow, too, to William Hurt, who has sometimes been too much of an actor but who plays a latter-day Communist official with bitter verity.

Three hours. I can't quite say that they flit by, particularly when the material is essentially familiar. But *Sunshine* is so sumptuous, the actors so refresh the very idea of good acting, that we are left grateful.

Woody Allen is relapsing again. Every time we think that he has learned from experience, he slips back. He made the enjoyable *Everyone Says I Love You*, in which he gave himself to a part within his narrow compass, then he blew his gain with *Deconstructing Harry*, where again he asked more of his acting than he could supply. Then came the appealing *Sweet and Lowdown*, which benefited greatly be cause he wasn't in it; and now he plunks on us an atrocity called **Small Time Crooks** (DreamWorks) in which he stars. He is not only in it, he's all over it. He is still so blind to his limitations as an actor that he gives himself a role that is wildly beyond him.

This new screenplay, too, is a lapse. It is a farce in which Allen is a failed minor crook who is married to a domineering wife and who is trying to make good somehow. He concocts a scheme to bore a tunnel under a bank and thus rob it. First, he rents a store two doors down (a hint of Conan Doyle's *The Red-Headed League*?) where his wife opens a cookie shop; then he and some pals dig a tunnel from below the shop that is meant to come up in the bank. The digging encounters accidents,

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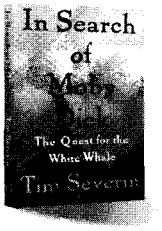

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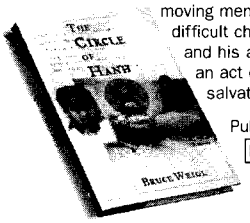

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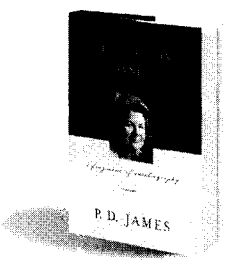

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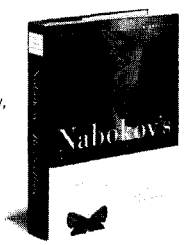

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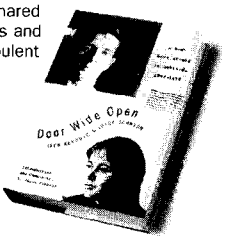

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and the tunnel comes up in the wrong place. (A hint of Monicelli's *Big Deal on Madonna Street*?) But the cookie shop itself is a hit; and one year later he and his wife are fantastically rich, dressing and living with a vulgarity that insults the vulgar. If that sudden wealth seems unlikely from cookies, equally unlikely is the device with which Allen impoverishes the couple later on. At the close, they are sadly wiser.

The story's creaky mechanics would matter less if Allen were a competent farceur. He is an amateurish disaster, flailing his arms constantly, pumping up energy hysterically, reacting to everything with such blatant face-making that he seems almost demented. It's as if he were auditioning for a vacancy in *The Three Stooges* and not making it.

His wife is Tracy Ullman, not exactly the Queen of Subtlety. Hugh Grant peddles some of his Mayfair suavity as an art dealer who wants to con Ullman in her rich phase and who drops her when she phases out. (Yes, that antique ploy.) Grant ought to be more careful about spreading his gloss around. He doesn't have that much to spare.

What is especially depressing about this picture is Allen's directing. Through the years he has become genuinely skilled, but most of *Small Time Crooks* looks as if it had been directed for early television. ■

Give Me Diversity or Give Me Death

By GORDON S. WOOD

Becoming America: The Revolution Before 1776 by Jon Butler

(Harvard University Press, 320 pp., $27.50)

REVOLUTIONS DO NOT just happen. They are the consequence of changing social, political, and cultural circumstances over a long period of time. This sensible proposition is the central theme of Jon Butler's book. According to Butler, American colonial society between 1680 and 1770 was dramatically transformed. During this period the small, primitive, and largely English settlements scattered along the North American coast became complicated and sophisticated societies. Enormous social, economic, political, and cultural transformations in these decades "created a distinctly modern, and, ultimately, 'American' society in Britain's mainland colonies."

Indeed, almost everything that came to constitute American society at the time of the Revolution was a product of developments in the eighteenth century, not the seventeenth century. In 1680, most European settlers were English; but, as Butler observes, "by 1770 Britain's mainland settlements contained a polyglot population of English, Scots, Germans, Dutch, Swiss, French, and Africans." During the eighteenth century, large numbers of black Africans had been brought as slaves into all the colonies, but especially into the colonies of the South. Farmers of various sorts had become involved in international market economies. By the eve of the revolution, merchants and planters had amassed and displayed wealth to a degree that their seventeenth-century predecessors could not have imagined possible. "Complex, sophisticated politics replaced the rudimentary political mechanisms typical of the seventeenth-century colonies." New patterns of production and consumption arose, and a vigorous religious pluralism replaced the traditional religious state-supported orthodoxies of the past.

By 1770, Butler says, America had become "the first modern society" in the world. He admits that some characteristics of modernity were lacking in Britain's eighteenth-century mainland colonies: they were never very urban, and they did not experience the massive technological changes of the nineteenth century. In most other measures of modernity, however, Butler believes that the eighteenth-century colonists came to know what being modern meant. They developed trans-Atlantic and international economies. They created the beginnings of large-scale participatory politics. They demonstrated "the modern penchant for power, control and authority over both humanity and nature that brooked few limitations or questions about their propriety." And, most important to Butler, they displayed a racial, ethnic, and religious diversity unmatched anywhere in the early modern world.

Of course, Butler concedes that America would become much more modern in the decades following the American Revolution. Slavery would become more devastating; politics would become more democratic; and the society would become more diverse, urban, and industrialized. "Still," says Butler, "the transformations between 1680 and 1770 carried a unique importance." The colonists of this period "created the America that fought the Revolution of 1776 and gave the new nation much of its essential identity."

UNTIL RECENTLY, AS Butler correctly points out, historians paid relatively little attention to the period between 1680 and the beginnings of the American Revolution. Owing to the lack of sufficient monographs in the period, attempts by historians to write synthetic histories of the eighteenth century have generally failed. Despite attempts by several historians, for example, the distinguished *History of the South* still lacks a volume for the period between 1689 and 1763, the only period of Southern history that is missing from the series.

Until a few decades ago, moreover, many historians of colonial America believed that the meaning of America could be exclusively located in the minds of the Puritans of early seventeenth-century New England. Colonial historians sometimes dealt with the founding of Jamestown in 1607 and the origins of Virginia, but they never gave the South, especially the southern colonies beyond Virginia, the attention that they lavished on New England. The middle colonies—New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, whose histories covered the period 1680–1760—were the most neglected of all. After recording the initial settlements and perhaps dealing with the Salem witchcraft craze of 1692, historians of early America tended to skip rather quickly through the rest of colonial history until they got to the decades leading up to the American Revolution. The result was a telescoped and foreshortened history of early America: from the Puritans to the revolution in a single bound.

All this has changed in the past several

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decades. Historians have not only explored the entire seventeenth-century Chesapeake in rich detail, recovering a world that we scarcely knew existed, but at long last they have also begun to give us sophisticated histories of the other colonies in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The neglected period, from 1680 to 1760, is no longer quite so neglected. We have learned about politics and economy in the Carolinas, about religion and ethnic conflict in the middle colonies, about the native Indians and immigration and the development of slavery in all of British North America.

There has occurred a virtual explosion of writings about colonial America. According to Bernard Bailyn, the historian who has dominated the period as much as any single scholar could, early American history in the last fifty years has experienced a "creative ferment of scholarship," resulting in "a wealth of research and writing concentrated on a relatively short period of time that is perhaps unique in western historiography." Since the colonial period has few of the headline political events of the national period—no presidential elections, no congresses, no Supreme Court decisions—it was especially receptive to the new social and cultural histories that have tended to engross history writing over the past three or four decades.

Colonial historians found themselves freer than historians of the national period to concentrate on long-term social and cultural developments that cut through the headline events and political institutions that tended to preoccupy historians of the national period. It is not surprising that the modern study of American demographic and family history began first in the colonial period; or that one of the earliest studies of American attitudes toward death concentrated on the colonial period. Unlike historians of the national period, who generally concentrate on a decade or two, colonial historians were used to dealing with long sweeps of time, and therefore they found the new social and cultural history of the past several decades especially attractive.

UNDER THESE NEW conditions, articles and books on early American history have poured from the presses in ever increasing volume, to the point where their numbers can easily overwhelm anyone trying to deal with them. For this reason alone, we must congratulate Butler for his attempt to bring under control this profusion of scholarship and to make sense of it in fewer than 250 pages. His book is a tour de force of synthesis. He has organized his book not chronologically but thematically, under five subjects—"Peoples," "Economy," "Politics," "Things Material," and "Things Spiritual"—and has devoted a chapter to each. A final chapter, entitled "1776," attempts to relate everything to the revolution.

Early modern Europe was a society in motion, and many Europeans were used to people of all sorts coming and going everywhere. But none of them, not even the Netherlands, which contained a wide variety of peoples, experienced the mobility and the diversity that transformed Britain's mainland colonies between 1680 and 1760. During the first six decades or so of colonization in the seventeenth century, England's North American settlements had remained relatively simple and primitive societies. There was little ethnic diversity. Nearly 90 percent of the tens of thousands of European immigrants to these early colonies were English. Their hold on the continent was far from secure, and they often struggled in orgies of blood and violence to maintain themselves against the natives, who originally outnumbered the early European settlers, in some areas by as many as ten to one.

In the eight or nine decades after 1680, however, all this changed. The Indians saw their numbers drastically reduced, and many of the remaining natives were pushed westward. In the southern colonies, the Indian population declined from about 200,000 to fewer than 60,000. Not only were the numbers of separate tribal groups east of the Mississippi reduced by half in the course of the eighteenth century, but in all the mainland colonies, writes Butler, "whole Indian cultures disappeared." At the same time, the European population expanded by leaps and bounds, from fewer than 200,000 people in 1690 to more than two million by 1770.

These mainland colonists became an ever more important proportion of the British empire. In 1700, there was only one colonist for every twenty inhabitants of Britain and Ireland combined. By 1770, this ratio had become one to five. This rapidly growing colonial population, which was probably multiplying faster than any part of the western world, was fueled not only by natural reproduction, but also by the immigration of tens of thousands of a wide variety of Europeans, most of whom were no longer English. In fact, "the British mainland colonies became a haven for non-English Europeans," creating a mixture of peoples that was unique in the colonial world.

But it was not the Europeans who constituted the largest group of arrivals in the British colonies in the decades after 1680. The most numerous addition of peoples by far was the 250,000 African slaves forcibly brought from the Caribbean or directly from Africa. Their numbers, Butler notes, "outstripped all European immigrants combined." Befitting their importance to the multihued society that America became, these Africans receive nearly one-third of the pages that Butler devotes to this initial chapter. Indeed, in all his chapters Butler devotes a good deal of time to describing the latest rich scholarly findings on both African slaves and native Indians, understandably so, even when these findings do not always fit his larger argument.

IN HIS CHAPTER on the economy, Butler sees the British mainland colonies between 1680 and 1770 soaring with unprecedented growth in every direction. The economy grew faster than the population, and became more various and complex. More and more Americans began selling more and more produce abroad, which in turn allowed them to buy an increasing array of consumer goods. Most farmers may have been largely subsistence farmers in the seventeenth century, but by 1760, argues Butler, in defiance of the views of some historians, most farmers in most colonies had become "commercial farmers" to one degree or another.

This chapter, like the others in Butler's book, is a model of synthesis. He has extracted information from a remarkable number of articles and monographs, and has put it all together in a compelling and readable form. In reconciling the different views of historians, his assessments are generally balanced and sensible. The only major omission in his discussion of the colonial economy is his neglect of paper money—one of the most innovative devices the colonists used to carry on their trade. Lacking the Bank of England, the colonists were compelled to create government-issued bills of credit and land bank notes as instruments of exchange and sources of small-scale investments.

Butler's chapter on colonial politics is less authoritative and convincing, mainly because he assumes that politics can exist only where there are elections—a highly presentist viewpoint. But local officials, outside of New England, were usually appointed, not elected, and so Butler concludes that most of the vigorous and significant political activity took place at the level of the provincial assembly rather than at the level of the town or the county. Perhaps. But most provincial politics involved local issues, and almost all of the day-to-day governing of people took place in town meetings and county courts. Provincial legislatures did not legislate in any modern sense, and provincial governors did not have legislative programs. Most of the legislatures' activities were private, local, and adjudicative. Given the

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large number of men eligible to vote in provincial elections, Butler is bewildered by how few actually did vote—"an anomaly," he says, "in a society so otherwise aggressive and demanding." Yet it was an anomaly only if one assumes that colonial politics was modern. It was not modern, not yet at least, though it was becoming so.

Unfortunately, Butler treats the period 1680–1770 too much as a single unit, and thus he cannot always deal adequately with the extraordinary political changes taking place over these decades, especially in the colonists' relationship to the empire. His astonishing description of the colonial agents in London as emissaries who "revealed the empire's utter centrality in colonial life" not only exaggerates the agents' role as "a principal avenue for articulating colonial sentiment at the hub," it also ignores changes in that role through time. The colonists used many other informal avenues of influence in London besides the agents; they appointed better men as agents in the seventeenth century than in the eighteenth century; and they found the effectiveness of the agents declining drastically in the decade prior to the Revolution.

In his treatment of "Things Material," Butler becomes much bolder and more patriotic. He is more eager to stress that colonial society had become "significantly different from either Britain or continental Europe" and more "American." Indeed, he endorses the presently much maligned notion of American "exceptionalism." Not only were the better-fed colonists on average three inches taller than their British cousins, but in the course of the eighteenth century they "created an increasingly distinctive secular material culture." They built houses and furnishings in their own distinctive styles, and they developed crafts that fused Old World and New World materials and fashions in innovative ways. Indeed, Butler contends that colonial craftsmen easily equaled and sometimes surpassed their provincial counterparts in Britain. He goes so far as to suggest that the Americans' preference for simpler and plainer styles in housing, furniture, and objects was merely a matter of their having better aesthetic taste than the ornate-loving British aristocracy. Was Washington's mixing of sand in the paint on the façade of Mount Vernon, designed to simulate stone, an example of this superior taste?

In his treatment of "Things Spiritual," Butler repeats much of his earlier and pungently argued book on the Christianizing of early America, *Awash in A Sea of Faith*, which appeared in 1990. Although he mainly wants to emphasize the ways in which eighteenth-century Americans developed distinctive religious patterns, he continues to contend that the Great Awakening was not as important as most historians believe it was. In fact, he refrains from using the term, and he instead talks about evangelical revivals, which, he says, contrary to general opinion, then and now, "embraced relatively conservative rather than egalitarian or radical tendencies."

In his final chapter, "1776," Butler is at pains to deny that all of the dynamic developments of the eighteenth-century colonies caused the American Revolution or made it inevitable. The revolution, he says, was essentially a product of political events in 1763–1776. Still, he cannot help but believe that all the social, political, and cultural transformations that he has described had a decisive influence on the character of the revolution. Indeed, he says that all those transformations had made American society "the first modern society," and the revolution thus became "the first modern revolution, *the* model for the French Revolution of 1789 and subsequently for so many nineteenth- and twentieth-century revolutions."

This is quite a claim, and I quite agree with it. But in what ways was eighteenth-century America the first modern society and the revolution the first modern revolution? Butler believes that the revolution "lacked dominant elements found in revolutions since." Class differences, he says, did not drive the revolution as they did the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions. Maybe there were not the class conflicts of other revolutions, but there were serious social antagonisms everywhere that propelled events. Nor, Butler writes, was there a single cohesive ideology comparable to modern Marxism. Again, maybe the republicanism of the American and French revolutions was not as single and cohesive as Marxism, but it was a powerful and coherent ideology, and just as radical for the eighteenth century as Marxism would be for the nineteenth century.

Still, even without these modern elements Butler thinks the American Revolution was modern, and it was modern because American society was modern. On the face of it, this seems a dubious claim. Many readers familiar with the period might naturally assume that Britain was the most modern of societies in the eighteenth century. After all, it had undergone a financial and commercial revolution, and it was already advanced in industrializing itself. It had London, the largest city in Europe, and a half dozen other burgeoning manufacturing centers, each with over 30,000 people. America, by contrast, remained overwhelmingly agricultural and rural. In 1760 its largest city, Philadelphia, had only about 20,000 people. Despite all the economic development that Butler emphasizes, the colonies were still remarkably underdeveloped compared to the mother country. America had no Bank of England, no stock markets, no large-scale manufacturing, and few urban centers that could compare with those in Britain. Whatever the extent of its domestic and international commerce, it differed from Britain's by orders of magnitude. In its artistic and cultural achievements, America was all promise and little or no substance.

Since many readers might think that Britain, and not America, was the most modern society in the eighteenth century, Butler tries at various points to stress American comparability with Britain. It is true, he admits, that the colonists did not develop large urban areas, but he suggests that "as early as 1720 cities of real urban complexity emerged from the meanest and simplest of towns." America may not have had the extensive manufacturing of Great Britain, but the craft trades in the colonies "compared favorably in breadth and possibly in depth with those found in Britain." Of course, Butler concedes that American artisans sometimes produced things in imitation of British styles, but just as often they revealed a "plenteous vigor, imagination, and a protean independence."

So eager is Butler to demonstrate the cultural precociousness of the colonists that he cites the Tuesday Club of Maryland, a small polite association active between 1745 and 1756, as something that "epitomized the artisanal, political, and literary creativity that could pour out from the colonies by the 1740s." He overlooks the fact that the Scottish physician and immigrant who founded the club did so because of his discovery upon his arrival in Maryland that its society was "barbarous and desolate" in contrast to that of Edinburgh.

Butler believes that America was finally more modern than Britain for a different reason: its remarkable mixture of peoples. He seems to think that modernity lies mainly in social and religious diversity. Perhaps that is so today. But what about the late eighteenth century? It is true that American leaders often marveled at the mixture of Europeans in their society; but what impressed them was not the multicultural diversity of these different peoples, but rather their remarkable acculturation and assimilation into one people. John Jay lived in New York City, the most ethnically and religiously diverse place in all America, and was himself three-eighths French and five-eighths Dutch, without any Eng-

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lish ancestry; and yet Jay could declare with a straight face, in *The Federalist*, No. 2, that

> Providence has been pleased to give this one connected country to one united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs and who, by their joint counsels, arms, and efforts ... have nobly established general liberty and independence.

The revolutionary leaders' idea of a modern state—it was an idea shared by enlightened British, French, and German eighteenth-century reformers as well—was a polity that was characterized by homogeneity, not one that was fractured by differences of language, ethnicity, and religion.

Much of Europe in the eighteenth century was still a patchwork of small duchies, principalities, and city-states—nearly 350 of them. Even those nation-states that had begun consolidating were not yet very secure or very homogeneous. England had struggled for centuries to bring Wales and Scotland under its control, and not until 1707, in the Act of Union, did it create the entity known as Great Britain. The ancien régime of eighteenth-century France was still a hodgepodge of provinces and diverse peoples, and by modern standards scarcely a single nation at all. Spain had just recently begun assimilating the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon into a single state, but the Basque provinces and Navarre still maintained an extraordinary degree of independence from the central monarchy.

European reformers everywhere wanted to eliminate these differences within their national boundaries and to bind the people of their states together in a common culture. The American revolutionaries were no different. They thought that Americans had become the most enlightened people in the world precisely because they had done away with the various peasant customs, craft holidays, and primitive peculiarities—the morris dances, the charivaries, the bear-baiting, and the other folk practices—that characterized the societies of the Old World. Americans seemed to be more of a single people than the nations of Europe. Nothing made enlightened eighteenth-century Americans prouder than the fact that most people in America spoke English and could understand one another from Maine to Georgia. That this was not true in the European nations was one of the great laments of enlightened reformers there. A

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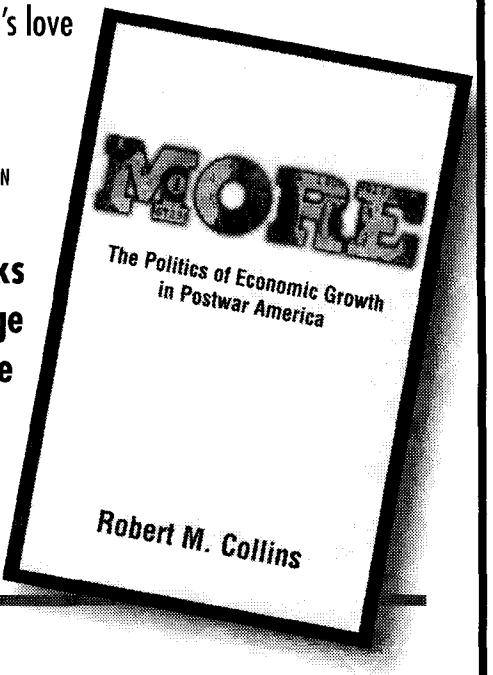

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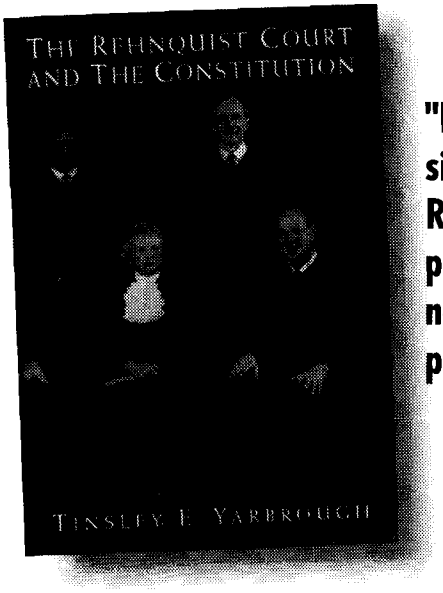

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Yorkshireman could not be understood in Somerset and vice versa. No task facing the French revolutionaries was more formidable than overcoming the fact that the majority of people in France did not speak French.

The republicanism of the revolutionaries put a premium on the homogeneity and the cohesiveness of their society. Monarchies could comprehend large territories and composite kingdoms and people with diverse interests and ethnicities. Monarchies had their unitary authority, kingly honors and patronage, hereditary aristocracies, established national churches, and standing armies to hold their diverse societies together. But republics had none of these adhesive elements. Republics were supposed to rely for cohesion on the moral qualities of their people—their virtue and their natural sociability. Republicanism created citizens, and citizens were all equal to one another. In fact, it was this emphasis on republican homogeneity and equal citizenship that drove the revolutionaries to exclude both blacks and Indians as citizens from the new republican nation-state that they were trying to establish. It was for the same reason that conventional wisdom, made famous by Montesquieu, dictated that republics should be small in size and similar in character.

At the time of the revolution, even religious diversity itself was not yet generally regarded as a good thing. To be sure, liberty of conscience was everywhere highly valued, but differences of religion were accepted only in so far as they made toleration and freedom of conscience possible. Many enlightened reformers, such as Jefferson and Madison, did greatly appreciate religious division, but they did so only because they realized that the more numerous the religious sects, the more likely those sects would want the state neutralized in religious matters. This in turn would allow secular reformers like themselves to set public policy free of religious interference. But ultimately even many of these secular reformers and deists yearned for a homogeneous society, as Jefferson did, in which all Americans might become Unitarians.

Butler ignores all these republican concerns. He can see only "the broad ethnic and religious heterogeneity that would typify America and so many modern societies throughout the nineteenth and twentieth societies." He concedes that for a while the revolutionary impulse and its preoccupation with British Whig political ideology "reduced the potential impact of ethnic and national pluralism in America." Even with this concession, however, Butler underestimates the degree to which the Americans' law and culture remained essentially British even after the revolution. His mistake is perhaps understandable, since he grossly miscalculates the percentage of people of British heritage in America. Butler has the British composing only a third of all inhabitants in 1770, when in fact even by 1790 the English and Scots together continued to make up over 60 percent of all Americans, including African Americans.

In his efforts to demonstrate the ways in which the modernity of eighteenth-century American society dictated much of the character of the revolution, Butler sometimes gets things backwards. American developments between 1680 and the revolution, he says, had created "aggressive, willful, modern societies far more self-sufficient and self-directing than anyone ever managed they could be or would be." These new modern societies had "modernity's confidence in its mastery of the world and of individual and collective lives," especially of the lives of Africans and Indians. Butler seems to believe that the "moral blindness" that led to the further reduction of the Indians and the continued enslavement of Africans "reflected the hubris born of modernity's material and technological fertility and wide-reaching political authority." But in fact it was modernity, reflected in the ideals of the American Revolution, that for the first time on a large scale morally condemned Americans' treatment of the Indians and the Africans. However brutally white Americans in fact treated Indians and Africans

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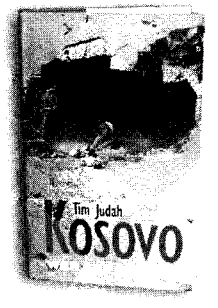

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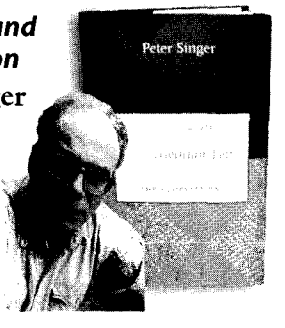

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in the decades following the revolution, and no one can deny the brutality, their mistreatment was denounced as a moral evil by more and more Americans in ways that had not been done in premodern times.

In the end, Butler is unable to connect in a satisfactory or convincing manner his first modern society with his first modern revolution. He realizes that the relationship is "complex, not simple or automatic." He correctly assumes that the revolution built heavily on the past. It could not have occurred without all the transformations he has earlier described, and it did not, and could not, sweep away the society that made it. But Butler seems unwilling to admit that white Americans in 1776 had any real grievances with their society and any real desires for substantial social and political reform.

He never recaptures the tension in eighteenth-century American society, the ways it looked backward and forward at the same time. It was still a small-scale, underdeveloped society very much dominated by expectations of dependency and personal relationships. But it was also a dynamic, remarkably egalitarian society that lacked sufficient personal influence and patronage power to fulfill these expectations. Consequently, the connectedness of colonial society—its capacity to bind one person to another—was exceedingly fragile and vulnerable to continual challenge. The revolution offered the decisive opportunity for challenge and change.

What ultimately made the American Revolution modern was not simply that it created a republic, but that it changed the way people related one to another. Americans became modern not because they were diverse in origins and religions, but because they came to believe that all citizens were equal and independent, and that all authority had to be earned by achievement and to be based on consent. In his rich and readable book, Jon Butler never quite explains why they should have come to believe in these ideals. ■

The Greening of Conservatism

By Alan Wolfe

Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There by David Brooks

(Simon and Schuster, 284 pp., $25)

We spend far more time interpreting the 1960s than we spent experiencing the decade. It is mostly conservatives who, unable to leave those years behind, invoke every theory at their disposal to account for why they happened. No sooner had demonstrations broken out at Berkeley in 1964 and at Columbia in 1968 than Freud was trotted out to explain why each generation rebels against its parents. Reflecting the socialist roots of so much neoconservative thought, Marx was cited to make sense of the ways in which radicals had become a "new class," poised to seize power from the bourgeoisie and to put it into the hands of therapeutic professionals. And in the most inventive twist of all, Allan Bloom found in the '60s the triumph of right-wing German philosophy, recognizing how soon Sartre would be forgotten and Heidegger would be revered.

In the past year, a new generation of conservatives, too young to have experienced those tumultuous years themselves, have begun to propose explanations of their own. In *How We Got Here*, David Frum argued that much of the personal liberation that we associate with the '60s actually took place in the 1970s, so that what at first glance appears to be a brief interlude in American life hints more long-lasting cultural transformations. Mark Lilla has suggested that the "left" movements of the '60s and the "right" movements of the 1980s were "one and indivisible," with the consequence that young people "see no contradiction in holding down day jobs in the unfettered global marketplace—the Reaganite dream, the left nightmare—and spending weekends immersed in a moral and cultural universe shaped by the Sixties." And now David Brooks develops and expands a similar explanation of how the radical chickens of the '60s came home to roost in the upper-class pretensions of the 1990s.

Brooks plays down his credentials as a theorist—"Max Weber has nothing to worry about from me"—but his curiosity did lead him, with the assistance of Irving Kristol, to one of the truly unappreciated classics of contemporary sociology: Cesar Graña's *Bohemian versus Bourgeois*, which appeared in 1964. Graña wrote that the novelists and the intellectuals of nineteenth century France, whatever their ostensible politics, united in condemning bourgeois life and in romanticizing bohemian life. Picture the first encounter between Allan Ginsburg and Norman Podhoretz as undergraduates at Columbia and you have some sense of how long Graña's antagonists have fought each other. In that fine pre-'60s moment, the future author of *Howl* and the future author of *Making It* define the two contrasting styles of American life: one rejects materialism in celebration of spiritual wholeness and personal pleasure, or one sublimates the impulses in pursuit of power and financial reward.

Nowadays, according to Brooks, we would look back on this meeting and wonder why a choice was necessary. Dot-com millionaires and workaholic lawyers have surely made it financially, yet their lifestyle choices are tinged with bohemian affectation. They rip out the ornate Victorian furnishings in their homes to expose brick and wood. Their consumption, however munificent, is inconspicuous. In their presentation of self, they give off the impression of disdaining wealth, as if, to be true to themselves, they would rather be off on some spiritual retreat. "The hedonism of Woodstock mythology," Brooks writes, "has been domesticated and now serves as a management tool for the Fortune 500." Daniel Bell was wrong, he suggests, to describe capitalism as torn between its ascetic drive to accumulate and its hedonistic urge to consume. Bourgeois values and bohemian values adjust to each other so easily that a new term—"Bobo"—is required to capture the full flavor of upper-class life in America.

In Brooks's account, the rebellious '60s turn out to have been, of all things, a ticket to upward mobility. The way to join the establishment was first to attack it. The demonstrators who congregated at Berkeley's Sproul Plaza went on to create Chez Panisse, the upscale restaurant of the 1980s and 1990s, and behind every Chez Panisse there exists an entire infantry of fresh vegetable markets, boutique wineries, espresso bars, and kitchen appliance outlets. One of the latter, Williams-

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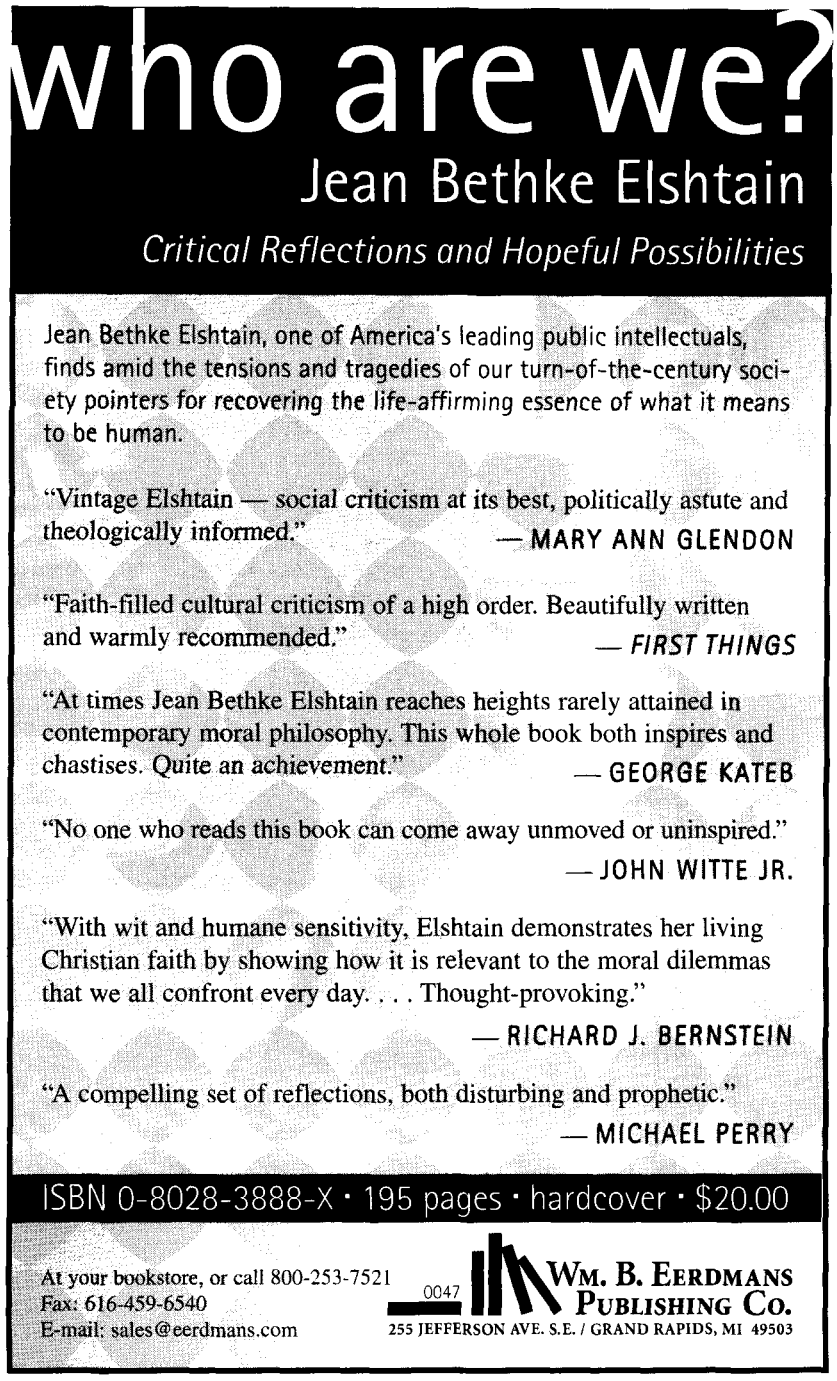
Sonoma, offers sausages whose origin can be traced back to the curing techniques pioneered by Native Americans. "This is not some Upton Sinclair jungle," Brooks writes, "but a noble lineage of craftsman sausage makers, and we members of the educated elite are willing to pay $29.50 for 24 little links in order to tap into this heritage."

"Comic sociology" is how Brooks describes his methodology, but this is comedy—and sociology—of a particular sort. Brooks writes that he is, overall, a defender of Bobo culture, which is not quite true. Despite his frequent inclusion of himself as a member of the species that he is analyzing, he is anything but an enthusiast for the tendency of Bobos to resolve all contradictions in favor of some higher cosmic consciousness. Yet in style, if not always in substance, *Bobos in Paradise* is an ideal Bobo book. It is, for one thing, a book, and in that sense it aspires to a certain seriousness; but it is also a short book whose humor continuously undercuts its own importance, as if Brooks himself were a bit too bohemian to want to leave behind a monument to bourgeois culture along the lines of, say, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. Bobos are too detached from emotions such as rage to take much of anything too seriously, and so is Brooks. The satire here is pointed and witty, but it is never nasty. His book will sell only if Bobos buy it, and Bobos are likely to buy it because they will recognize its author as one of their own.

Brooks's sociology is similarly casual. If his roving eye discovers something that strikes him as an interesting commentary on our times—wedding announcements in *The New York Times*, travel brochures urging visits to faraway places, corporate mission statements—he will immediately incorporate it into his story. The method does not always work. Brooks has a chapter on how to become a public intellectual, for example, in which he offers guidance for developing the right Rolodex and learning the snappiest soundbites. Not only does this chapter fail to fit the thesis of his book, it is also heavy-handed and flat. But when Brooks's method works, it works marvelously. It is indeed worth pondering why a Boston-based consulting firm gives job applicants a "Lego/Play-Doh" test or why British Airways has an official corporate jester. Brooks's chapter describing the ways cutting-edge companies go out of their way to pretend that they have little or nothing to do with making money is as devastating a commentary on the modern corporation as anything in C. Wright Mills or William H. Whyte.

As corporations become more bohemian, bohemians become more bourgeois. Yesterday's radicals, Brooks points out, are today defender's of the need for moral order. It is not just a matter of feminists condemning pornography or Hillary Clinton praising the kinds of villages that were once vilified by Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis. Before the '60s, Brooks writes, the symbol of bourgeois philistinism was the bowling alley; but now the bowling alley has become the symbol of civic renewal. Boboism is a matter of give-and-take. Established institutions no longer sure of their purpose meet former rebels no longer sure of their radicalism halfway. The most regularly cited lines used to describe the '60s were Yeats's in "The Second Coming"; but Bobo culture is precisely what you get when the center cannot hold, but anarchy, contrary to Yeats, is not yet loosed upon the world.

As both comedy and sociology, *Bobos in Paradise* succeeds nicely. A terrifically entertaining read, it is fundamentally correct in its premise: bourgeois and bohemian may have been antagonistic to each other in nineteenth-century France, but they work perfectly well together in twenty-first-century America. If Brooks's thesis has a flaw, it is that it is offered too modestly. For it is not only the wealthy who aspire both to material comforts and quests for higher meaning. These days the stores that sell to exurbanites have branch outlets all over America. Personal trainers—indeed, personal gurus—can be hired by middle managers and secretaries. Evangelical congregations attractive to



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the lower middle class can be just as therapeutically spiritual as upper-class Unitarians. Boboism is not a slice of American life. It *is* American life.

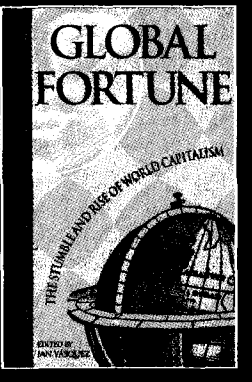
DAVID BROOKS IS the product of a conservative intellectual subculture. That such a subculture even exists is one sign of the degree to which the '60s changed America. Children of privilege—some of whose fathers literally planned the war in Vietnam or managed the companies that dominated the alleged American empire—turned radically, sometimes violently, to the left. But no such transformation took place on the right. Those neoconservatives who found themselves in opposition to everything for which the 1960s stood also had children, literally and figuratively. (One of the literal ones, William Kristol, runs *The Weekly Standard*, at which David Brooks is a senior editor.) Those children grew up in a world in which the left had become the establishment. For them, the right was the only credible counterculture.

Not all radicals of the '60s became comfortably bourgeois, of course; but nearly all of them came to suffer from intellectual complacency. As the New Left became the defender of the university that it once wanted to tear down, it lost the critical spirit that had once produced energetic social criticism. The long march through the institutions turned out to be a vertical march up the institutional hierarchy, eventually producing a First Couple capable of speaking '60s talk while persuading Wall Street of their reliability.

But it was not just political moderation that overtook the left. The tone of its writers took on a weighted pomposity, as if the left were the natural ruling class of the society, the rightful place that it had been denied by the clever tactics of the right. Once there were radical books—*The Sociological Imagination*, *Growing Up Absurd*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*—that enlightened and enraged. Now there is only pious sermonizing, bureaucratic obfuscation, and old-folks resignation. One cannot find a single interesting radical nonfiction writer in America under (or over) fifty. The brightest young star produced by the American left wrote a book attacking the very quality that brings *Bobos in Paradise* to life: irony.

No wonder, then, that popular social criticism has been taken over by people who (I presume) vote Republican. If there were no social criticism coming from the right these days, America would have almost no social criticism. Social criticism is provoked when people take themselves too seriously, and nobody these days takes themselves more seriously than leftists who believe that Americans who like the

THE STUMBLE AND RISE OF WORLD CAPITALISM



After two world wars, the Great Depression, and experiments with socialism interrupted the liberal economic order that began in the 19th century, the world economy has now returned at the very least to the level of globalization that it previously enjoyed. Capitalism has made the 20th century one of unrivaled prosperity, yet critics still fault markets for spreading instability and poverty—citing financial crises in Asia and elsewhere as evidence. These essays assess such claims, propose improvements to the international financial system, and evaluate the prospects that the recent conversion to global capitalism will be sustained. Contributors include **Deepak Lal, Julian Simon, Mario Vargas Llosa, Rudiger Dornbusch,** and **Andrei Illarionov,** chief economic adviser to Russian president Vladimir V. Putin.

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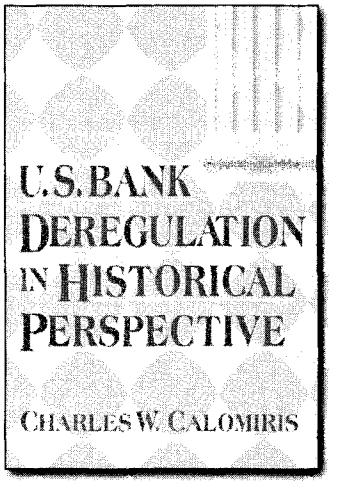

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free market and dislike affirmative action are incapable of thinking for themselves, and have somehow been duped by the nefarious forces of the right. The left is no longer the instigator of social criticism; it has instead become its target.

Still, there is something odd about conservative social criticism. To understand why, consider how Brooks's book differs not from what the left produces now, but from what the right produced just a few years back. There is, first of all, Brooks's humor. Humor is not a quality that springs to mind when one thinks of a conservative outlook on the world; one does not read Gertrude Himmelfarb or Midge Decter for the jokes. Like contemporary leftists, neoconservatives became too sanctimonious, too convinced that only they stood between civilization and barbarism; and there continue to be conservatives who write in this dour, self-important manner. Even when conservatives have been funny, most notably P.J. O'Rourke, there has lurked behind their words a bitter aftertaste.

The big news out of the conservative camp is therefore the arrival on the scene of writers such as David Brooks and David Frum who are simply (but smartly) funny. One wonders what their ideological elders, so preoccupied with saving Western civilization, make of such insouciant sensibilities. Are they writers slouching, however gingerly, toward the Gomorrah of irony and relaxation?

THEY MAY WELL be. Brooks's book suggests that one cannot be both funny and conservative for too long. For humor is not the only characteristic of Brooks's writing that distinguishes him from the neoconservatives of the previous generation. Brooks also has mixed feelings about wealth—and about the corporations whose aim is to maximize it.

Irving Kristol's version of conservatism had little to say about the rich. To be sure, Kristol argued that capitalism had a bad reputation among intellectuals, and he urged capitalists to defend themselves more vigorously against the frequent attacks launched against them. But if every intellectual has to have a favorite class or two, for Kristol it was the respectable poor and the lower middle. Those are the people, Kristol wrote in one essay after another, who truly believe in such bourgeois virtues as faith, country, and family. To defend and to protect them, he railed against the new elites ensconced in the media, government, and the clergy who dismissed such virtues as obsolete. It was a brilliant tour de force, but it did suffer a fatal flaw. As many critics have shown, capitalist priorities did more to break up families and to undermine loyalty to country than any feminist tract or government regulation. Their silence about the corporate rich became the shame of the neoconservatives.

But Brooks has no trouble criticizing corporations, if for no other reason than that he sees no difference between them and the "new class" which, at least according to Kristol, despised capitalism. The theory of the new class, one of neoconservatism's most interesting ideas, is totally demolished by Brooks. Kristol, and others like him, took the radical writers of the 1960s—Norman O. Brown, Herbert Marcuse, and Charles Reich—too literally. Whatever the writers of such tracts meant to say about the evils of corporate America and the pleasures of subversion, readers came away persuaded of the need for greater personal freedom on the one hand and for more caring and sensitive environments on the other—qualities that corporations, always on the lookout for fresh talent and new markets, were perfectly willing to provide.

The corporate elite proved itself to be indifferent to self-defense and completely uninterested in bourgeois virtue. Lenin had it only half right: capitalists are not only willing to sell the rope with which they will be hung, they will also build the platform, pay for the executioner, and create a fund to clean up the mess. Fortunately for them, the likely hangmen are more interested in the price of the rope than in actually using it, as if they could come up with a business plan that would enable them to transform the hemp into something with potential medical uses.

AMERICAN CAPITALISM HAS SO little in common with conservatism that Brooks feels no need to rush to its defense. For Brooks and many of his colleagues at *The Weekly Standard*, conservative virtues are more likely to be found among military patriots than among global profiteers. These are writers who recognize, as many neoconservatives did not, that conservative virtues predate the rise of the bourgeoisie. Their sources are the heroic epics of ancient Greece and Rome, not the everyday practicality of Benjamin Franklin and Andrew Carnegie. Brooks was a strong supporter of John McCain in the Republican primaries for the same reason that the Roosevelts were so long associated with the Navy. If we are to be inoculated against Bobo culture, it will have to come from war or the moral equivalent of it. Honor, courage, and loyalty are not tested through initial public offerings or sustained by clever accounting techniques. Bobos may succeed in business without really trying, but you do not see them lining up for ROTC.

The military may well prove more resis-

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tant to bohemian lifestyles than the corporation, though one suspects that at least some of what Charles Reich called Consciousness III—especially gender and racial sensitivity—has left its mark there. Still, Brooks longs for the kind of politics that America once had when it was more prepared to contemplate the possibility of war. "The people of the left and right who long for radical and heroic politics are driven absolutely batty by Bobo politics," he writes.

Implicit in that sentence is an idea that is worthy of being unpacked. America's two parties are not liberals and conservatives. There is instead a party of resignation and a party of ambition. The former includes Clinton and Gore moderates as well as Republicans so tied to the lobbies that enrich their campaign coffers that they are incapable of articulating any new policies at all. The latter includes both those who think that America needs a new way of financing health care and redistributing income as well as those who think that America ought to intervene in other countries to promote global stability. Brooks longs for a version of conservative ambition; but he seems to recognize that this leaves him with a temperament closer to liberal activism than to conservative complacency. Brooks has little in common with Ralph Nader, but they both have mixed feelings about Boboism.

ONCE THE IDEA of the new class is thrown out, the concept of the culture war cannot be far behind. It was axiomatic to an earlier generation of neoconservative writers that America, as Gertrude Himmelfarb has recently written, has two cultures: a more religious and patriotic lower-middle-class culture and a more relativistic and skeptical elite culture. But Boboism represents a peace treaty in the culture war. Occasionally a neoconservative writer will acknowledge that the culture war is over, but only because the secular humanists won. As Brooks describes the terms of the treaty, however, it seems that conservatives may have won after all. "It is more of a temperament than a creed," Brooks writes of Bobo spirituality. "Bobo moralists are not heroic, but they are responsible. They prefer the familiar to the unknown, the concrete to the abstract, the modest to the ardent, civility and moderation to conflict and turmoil."

It could be that I appreciate Brooks's description because it relies heavily on my own research; but what I find most striking about his characterization of the American mood is not that it supports the thesis that we have one culture, not two. Brooks resonates with the unapocalyptic conservatism of Michael Oakeshott rather

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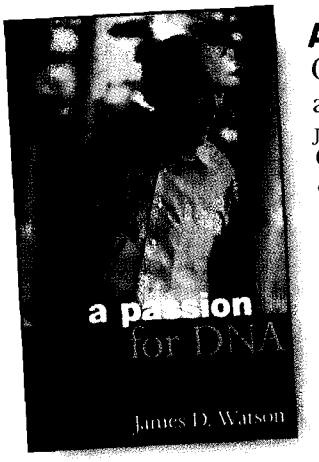

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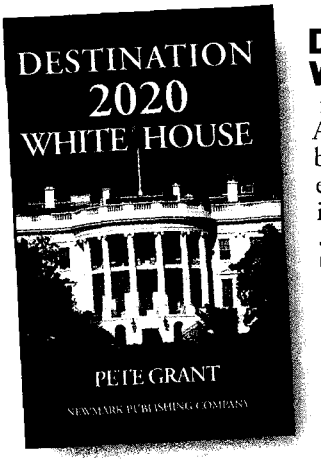

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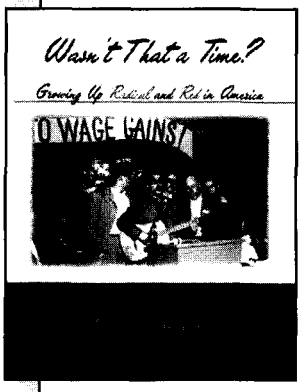

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than the *Sturm und Drang* conservatism of Himmelfarb (who entitled one of her books *Looking into the Abyss*). Once again Brooks does not draw out the full implications of what he is saying. I take him to mean that the culture warriors of the right had better tone down their rhetoric because they simply do not understand the America that they presume to be defending.

Brooks has his worries about Bobo culture. Its spiritual life, for all its moderation, is "tepid and undemanding." Under its reign, we may well "become a nation that enjoys the comforts of private life and local life but has lost any sense of national union and any sense of a unique historical mission." Unlike the best and the brightest of the early '60s, the meritocrats among the Bobos are "only dimly aware of themselves as an elite and unaware yet of their capacities."

Brooks is right to emphasize the ways in which Bobos have saved us not only from the extremes of the '60s, but also from the extremes of the '80s. Compared to People's Park—that slice of liberated Berkeley territory that become the home of drug addicts and street people—there is something to be said on behalf of Chez Panisse. And compared to the firebrands of the Reagan revolution, there is something to be said for Ben and Jerry's style of capitalism. If the worst thing that we can say of a generation is that it craves higher-powered ovens to roast its organic quail, our society must be in pretty good shape.

That ought not make it immune from criticism, of course. But the best social criticism is likely to share a Boboesque sensibility: puzzled rather than ponderous, aloof and not partisan, and capable of winking as its own foibles. Conservatives, if they are to avoid complete marginalization, need a writer like Brooks. Chances are they will not be able to keep him. ■

Progressively Worse

By RONALD RADOSH

American Dreamer: A Life of Henry A. Wallace by John C. Culver and John Hyde

(W.W. Norton and Co., 608 pp., $35)

OLDER READERS OF this magazine will remember Henry A. Wallace, because he briefly served as editor-in-chief of THE NEW REPUBLIC after having been summarily dismissed from Harry Truman's Cabinet in 1946. But Wallace is most remembered, surely, for his impassioned campaign for the presidency on a third-party ticket, which he named the Progressive Party, in 1948. For this futile crusade, the remnants of the Popular Front supporters during the New Deal, and the fellow travelers of the early Cold War, have over the years persistently honored his memory.

Every few years a book appears praising Wallace's supposedly prophetic voice in the Cold War, that of a lonely fighter for peace who dared to oppose Truman's "get tough with Russia" policy. We have had Richard J. Walton's *Henry Wallace, Harry Truman and the Cold War* (1976) and before that, the Communist historian Norman D. Markowitz's *The Rise and Fall of the People's Century:Henry A. Wallace and American Liberalism, 1941-1948* (1973), as well as a two-volume academic study of his life by Edward L. and Frederick H. Schapsmeier, *Henry A. Wallace of Iowa: The Agrarian Years, 1910–1940*; *Prophet in Politics: Henry A. Wallace and the War Years, 1940–1965*; and Alan Yarnell's book, *Democrats and Progressives: The 1948 Presidential Election as a Test of Postwar Liberalism*. More recently, Graham White and John Maze produced *Henry A. Wallace: His Search for the New World Order*. Until now, however, Wallace has not been the subject of a major one-volume biography, of a study that makes the man accessible to the public and makes use of material not previously available. John C. Culver, the former senator from Iowa, and John Hyde have now undertaken this task.

Their life of Wallace is garnished with a page of blurbs that cannot be ignored. John Kenneth Galbraith calls it "indis-

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pensable;" Doris Kearns Goodwin describes it as a "masterly work;" Michael Beschloss says it is "fascinating, thoughtful, incisive"; Edward M. Kennedy recommends Wallace's life as "one of the most profound and extraordinary chapters in the history of American liberalism"; and George McGovern calls Wallace a "great man," and tells us that he cannot recall "when—if ever—I've read a better biography." A great book about a great man? Alas, no. These encomia are just more evidence of the sorry state of American liberalism. And recently Susan Faludi did her own bit in rescuing Henry Wallace from oblivion, when she described him moistly in *Stiffed* as "an Iowa agrarian who spun a progressive dream for the nation's future," and saluted him for promoting "a maternal conception of manhood."

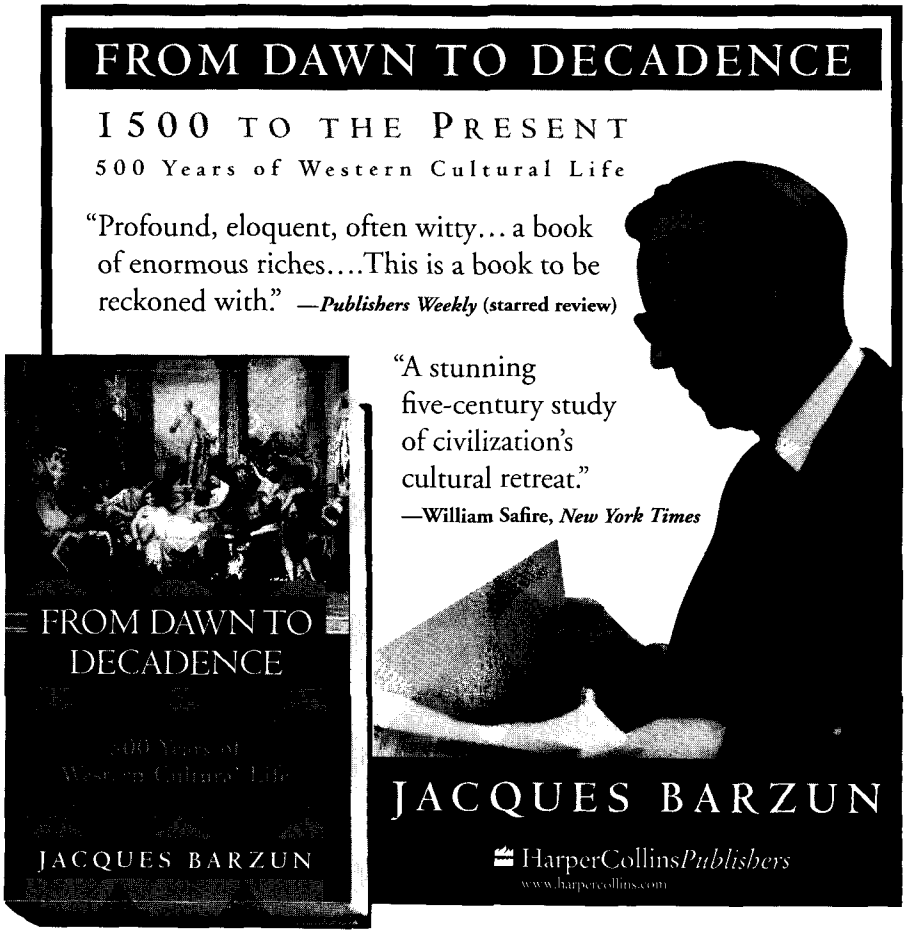
Wallace certainly does deserve a biography. He was, for those who do not know, the son of a Republican secretary of agriculture in the Harding administration. His grandfather and his father had been founders and editors of *Wallace's Farmer*, the nation's leading farm journal; and he was raised as both a journalist and a tiller of the soil. Wallace was, in fact, an agricultural genius—a man who believed in the concept of scientific agriculture, and in the diligent agronomic use of statistical research; and a scientist whose own research led him to develop and spread the process of hybrid corn—a process that revolutionized the yield of corn and led to an agricultural revolution. Culver and Hyde report that Wallace's introduction of hybrid corn to Mexico changed the yield from ten bushels to the acre in 1940 to a tripling of corn production and a fivefold increase in wheat production, so that by 1948 Mexico no longer had to import food. When Norman Borlaug received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for his work on high-yielding wheat, which led to averting worldwide famine, he credited Wallace as the single inspiration for the "green revolution."

THE INTERESTING QUESTION is whether a scientific agriculturist such as Wallace was fit for the political life. Culver and Hyde strenuously seek to give a positive answer, but the evidence that they provide actually shows quite the opposite. Wallace went into politics after he blamed his father's early death in 1924, at the age of fifty-eight, on Herbert Hoover, with whom his father had major political differences. The elder Wallace had favored the McNary-Haugen farm-price-support bill, which Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover had fiercely denounced. His son—H.A., as the family called him—quickly shifted to support of the Democratic challengers; and when FDR won the White House in 1933, he appointed the popular Iowan as his secretary of agriculture.

The job was a natural fit. Already disgruntled with Republicans, Wallace met with Roosevelt and concluded that the incoming president was a man "ready to pitch into the agricultural problem at once." Devoted to parity payment for farmers, who had been devastated by the Great Depression, Wallace sought to enhance their incomes through the control of farm output. But he was no radical. Indeed, in the crucial challenges to the administration's rather conservative farm policies that were waged by the Young Turks in the Agricultural Department—among them men who turned out to have ties to both the Communist Party and to Soviet espionage, such as Alger Hiss—Wallace sided with the conservatives. Norman Thomas had taken up the cause of black sharecroppers, and radicals in the AAA sought to use the cotton codes to support the rights of farm tenants; and Jerome Frank, Lee Pressman, Hiss and others put the interpretation of the codes into effect behind Wallace's back. When he found out what happened, Wallace supported the conservatives who orchestrated what was called the "purge of the liberals." His associate Rexford Tugwell, who was to lead the Resettlement Administrations, FDR's farm program designed to provide lands to poor and displaced farmers, attacked Wallace for both a "failure of leadership" and for giving in to "pretty sinister sources."

MOST PEOPLE VIEWED Wallace's tenure as secretary of agriculture as a great success. He led the way with programs on soil conservation and control of erosion, research to attack plant and animal diseases, and the use of hybrid seeds—of which his own company, Pioneer Hi-Bred, would become the most successful producer. But Wallace was not just an agrarian wonk. He was also something of a mystic, a man whose quest for spiritual fulfillment led him down strange paths. Reading Culver's and Hyde's book, I could not help but think that Wallace would be at home in today's spiritually buffoonish culture, journeying to Sedona to partake of the latest New Age rituals and to channel the sages of the past.

Culver and Hyde tell us that Wallace's mystical bent showed itself quite early, after he left the Presbyterian Church of his father's faith, when he was a young man. They gently describe Wallace as a man who sought to explore "the spiritual universe, sometimes to its outer reaches." That is an understatement. Beginning with his infatuation with the works of



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Ralph Waldo Trine, a popularizer of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Wallace proclaimed himself a "practical mystic," a man in search of a "fantastic spiritual voyage" that moved from "mainstream Protestantism to the esoteric fringes of Eastern occultism."

Wallace found a man named Charles Roos, an American of Finnish ancestry who claimed to be an American Indian medicine man, and who was admitted somehow to the Chippewa Nation. Roos told Wallace that in their prior lives he and Wallace had been Seneca warriors. With Roos, Wallace sought to find "the religious key note of the new age." When he brought his wife to meet Roos, her reaction (as their son later wrote) was simply that "the man was mad." Wallace's search for what he called the "inner light" led him eventually to a certain Nicholas Konstantinovitch Roerich, a Russian émigré painter and advocate of theosophy, and a man adept in what Culver and Hyde describe as the talent of "separating wealthy Americans from their money." In his many letters to Roerich, Wallace affectionately referred to him as "Dear Guru."

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Henry Wallace, Pete Seeger, and children of Progressive Party campaign workers, 1948

Culver and Hyde do not explain how so scientific-minded and practical an individual as Wallace could become so intellectually muddled. Roos and the others with whom Wallace crossed paths influenced him, but Roerich completely bowled him over. His letters to Roerich were, to put it mildly, bizarre. On March 12, 1933, for example, Wallace wrote his guru that he was thinking "of the New Country going forth to meet the seven stars under the sign of the three stars." Wallace told Roerich that he was going to "await the Stone" and welcome him "again to this glorious land of destiny," and he was awaiting advice so as to be "prepared to do what I am to do." He ended by wishing Roerich that "Peace, Joy and Fire attend" him "as always."

This time the credulous Wallace's fascination with his guru did cross over into his public life. Within the Roosevelt administration, he became a private champion of Roerich's scheme for a pact proclaiming a "Banner of Peace" that would tie the nation's worlds together "in appreciation of a common human purpose." It was as if a top official of the Johnson administration in the 1960s were agitating for the program of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Indeed, Wallace got the State Department to allow him to represent the nation at a Roerich conference held in the nation's capital.

Even more damaging was Wallace's decision to send Roerich on an official government mission. Roerich was put in charge of a government expedition to Central Asia to collect drought-resistant grasses, which would have been immensely useful to American farmers whose crops were ruined by severe drought. Government experts refused to have anything to do with the mystic painter, and they traveled to Asia on separate ships with their own agenda. Arriving in Central Asia, Roerich and his son spent their time giving out leaflets in Manchuria announcing that Roerich was "one of the greatest leaders of world culture." Accompanied by private armed bodyguards, Roerich spent his time and his money traveling and proselytizing, accomplishing virtually nothing of value. Yet Wallace defended him, and fired those in the government who sought to force Roerich to come home, and even nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize. Roerich spent sixteen months abroad, coming back with about twenty plants. The mission was a virtual fiasco, and the secretary of agriculture severed his relations with the spiritual hustler in the summer of 1935.

Wallace was a loyal administration stalwart. His mystical contacts were unknown to the public: what the public saw was a hard-working, frugal, and dedicated public servant, who in 1934 alone spoke and traveled in every state of the union. Wallace wrote scores of articles, and published two books, *Statesmanship and Religion*, based on lectures that he had delivered at the Chicago Theological Seminary, and *America Must Choose*, a brief on behalf of free trade between nations. He was always ready to meet with the press, and slowly he became the public face of the new American liberalism. He was, in effect, the political equivalent of Eleanor Roosevelt, the one politician in a government position who put principle above politics, and who stood in public for the most exalted liberal ideals—ideals that the president, who had to be concerned with politics, would sometimes have to scant. In a time in which television was in its infancy, and many Americans did not even know what the vice president looked like, Wallace was able to travel alone throughout the country, without protection, often driving himself and stopping regularly to chat with farmers and regular folk. Popular with both farmers and organized labor, Wallace was anathema to party regulars and the northern Democratic machines. FDR nonetheless tapped him for the second spot on the 1940 ticket, and despite hostility and anger from convention delegates, the nomination went to Wallace.

Perhaps the most valuable new information in Culver's and Hyde's biography is their explanation for why the Republican Party did not make use of Wallace's "guru letters" to Roerich, which had been leaked by his opponents, and were resting in

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Republican hands. Had those letters been made public, the results could have been devastating for the ticket, and might even have harmed Roosevelt's chances for reelection. As Culver and Hyde put it, the letters would make Wallace "appear mystical at best and irrational at worst." One could not imagine such restraint in today's politics. But the restraint of the Republicans was not loftily motivated. Culver and Hyde disclose that the White House had its own hidden ammunition that stopped any Republicans from making use of them. Roosevelt's Republican opponent for the presidency, Wendell Wilkie, had a mistress named Irita Van Doren, the literary editor of *The New York Herald Tribune*. The press knew about Wilkie's relationship with Van Doren. (He held a press conference in her New York City apartment!) And the White House spread the word that if the Republicans decided to leak the Wallace-Roerich correspondence, they would quickly spread the word about Wilkie's adulterous relationship.

HENRY WALLACE BECAME vice president, ironically, just as the New Deal was winding down. As Roosevelt himself put it, Dr. Win-the-War would soon replace Dr. New Deal. Wallace's position was largely ceremonial, but Roosevelt sought to give him his own base of operation. He appointed Wallace head of the Economic Defense Board, where he worked on war mobilization and became a leading advocate, after Pearl Harbor, for the war effort.

Wallace was soon to learn that his devotion to the president did not give him cover when conservatives in the administration worked against his own plans. Culver and Hyde mark January 14, 1942 as "the zenith of Henry A. Wallace's influence and authority as a public official," because he was at that moment the head of three different wartime bodies: chairman of the Supply Priorities and Allocations Board, chairman of the Board of Economic Warfare, and a member of what was called the Top Policy Group. As James Reston wrote, he was "the administration's head man of Capitol Hill, its defense chief, economic boss and No.1 postwar planner."

So it came as a shock to him when Roosevelt told him on that day that he was going to place war production under the control of a new single agency, and that Donald Nelson, and not Wallace, would be the head of the new revamped War Production Board. The realization that he was not really number one—not the assistant president, as some had thought him to be—provoked a growing "sense of distrust" toward Roosevelt. And when Wallace became involved in a bitter fight with Jesse Jones, the secretary of commerce, the president sided with Jones. Wallace had wanted regulations on foreign rubber, tin, and copper that was purchased for the war effort that would protect the rights of organized labor—a type of Wagner Labor Relations Act regulating foreign trade. Jones, a conservative Texan, fiercely opposed Wallace, and the vice president was impugned for advocating a "quart of milk for every Hottentot," something he never said, but which had been quoted so many times that even Roosevelt thought that he had made such a statement.

In this crucial battle, the president put politics—the desires of Southern Democratic conservatives—above principle; and when the 1944 election came round, Roosevelt let it be known that, although he personally preferred Wallace to be his vice presidential candidate, he would not oppose other names being put forward. Meanwhile Wallace was becoming the main spokesman within the administration—with the First Lady—for full-force liberalism. His speech "The Century of the Common Man," delivered in November 1941 and soon to be the title of the book that presented his political outlook to the reading public, became the codeword for the kind of assertive liberalism at home and abroad that was generally contrasted with what liberals considered the narrow and ethnocentric call to arms by Henry Luce in his more famous "American Century" editorial in the February 17, 1941 issue of *Life*. For all practical purposes, Wallace had become the man of the liberal-left within the New Deal coalition, the political leader favored by Sidney Hillman and the CIO, the man most courted by left-wing New Dealers who did not oppose working with Communists in the wartime Popular Front.

WALLACE BEGAN TO speak out on American foreign policy, an area that was never his area of expertise. And his pronouncements revealed a fervent pro-Soviet orientation. From the beginning, Wallace was a dupe of the Soviets. In 1943, he was warning about "fascist interests motivated largely by anti-Russian bias" whom, he worried, were seeking to "get control of our government." His enemies in Washington vigorously opposed his receiving the vice presidential spot in 1944, and Culver's and Hyde's explanation—that a line "in the political sand" had been drawn in which "conservatives, corporations, portions of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, British imperialists, native isolationists and Southern segregationists," that is, the bad guys, stood against the labor movement, the forces advocating civil rights, and the

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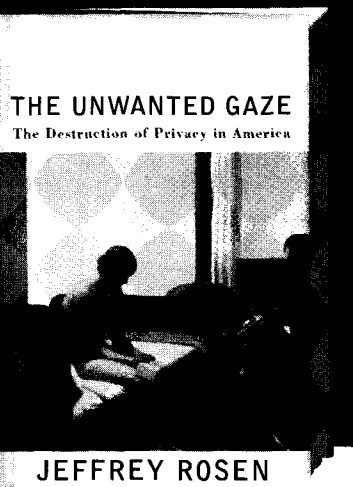

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"common man"—is too simplistic to explain anything.

Culver and Hyde do acknowledge that by that time Wallace "had tossed about the word 'fascist' so widely and provocatively" that he had to try to explain himself in an article in *The New York Times*. His explanation was that the "fascists" were those who baited Jews and Catholics, and cultivated "hate and distrust" toward Britain and Russia, and sought to keep "the common man in eternal subjection." As Culver and Hyde are forced to admit, his case was so broad "that virtually anyone opposed to his ideas could be termed a fascist." What they do not say is that the tarring of opponents with the "fascist" brush was the favored course of attack used by American Communists and their supporters.

IT SHOULD NOT have come as a surprise that in May 1944, when Roosevelt sent Wallace on a trip to wartime Asia, concentrating on twenty-two cities in Soviet Siberia and accompanied by two advisers, John Carter Vincent and Owen Lattimore, Wallace allowed the wool to be pulled tightly over his eyes. When he met with Ambassador Averell Harriman in Uzbekistan, Harriman told members of the press in an off-the-record conversation that Wallace clearly sought to abandon freedom in the name of efficiency, and that he thought the vice president believed "in a collective society." As if he was aching to prove Harriman correct, Wallace published his report in a book titled *Soviet Asia Mission*, in which he described the port city of Magadan as a "combination TVA and Hudson's Bay Company." Culver and Hyde point out that Magadan was actually "a slave labor camp, which Soviet officials elaborately transformed into a 'Potemkin Village' prior to his visit. Watchtowers were dismantled, wire fences removed, prisoners herded out of sight." Indeed, KGB officers were assigned the task of appearing as happy villagers and workers.

Years later, long after Wallace had left the ranks of the fellow travelers, he confessed that "I was altogether too much impressed by the show put on by high Russian officials." It is to Culver's and Hyde's credit that they include such damning information about Wallace's naïveté in their book. Still, they somehow fail to put this together with Wallace's consistent pro-Sovietism, which they imply was completely on target. Contrary to Culver and Hyde, it comes as a relief—knowing that Roosevelt would live only a little longer—that Wallace was left off the ticket in 1944. By his own word, Wallace would have made Harry Dexter White his secretary of the Treasury, as a news story by journalist Malcolm Hobbs reported in April 22, 1948. (It is cited in Klehr's and Haynes's *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America*.) Laurence Duggan, who accompanied Wallace on his tour of South America in 1943, was also a Soviet agent, though Culver and Hyde do not let their readers know this about him. Indeed, Soviet cables have revealed that the KGB hoped that if Wallace became Secretary of State, or held any other important government post, Duggan could aid the Soviets by "using his friendship" with Wallace for "extracting . . . interesting information."

Instead, Culver and Hyde discuss Duggan in a most dishonest assessment and a disingenuous footnote. In the text of the book, they observe only that Duggan "accompanied Wallace on his tour of South America in 1943 and was said by Senator Karl Mundt to have been a member of a six-man espionage team in the State Department." The implication is that a conservative Republican Senator was engaging in an obvious smear of Duggan. The footnote to the text addresses only the issue of whether or not Wallace had ever said that he would have made Duggan and White officials in a Wallace administration, and Culver and Hyde claim to have found no such evidence. They choose to ignore the Hobbs dispatch entirely. And yet their note refers to Klehr's and Haynes's work, and to Allen Weinstein's *The Haunted Wood*. Since they have consulted these books, they must know that both Duggan and White were Soviet agents.

AFTER ROOSEVELT'S VICTORY, Wallace was kept in the Cabinet, as the secretary of commerce—a sop by the President to Wallace's labor-left coalition supporters. After FDR's death, Wallace was not long to keep the position. The story of how Truman fired Wallace in September 1946, after his secretary persisted in advocating a pro-Soviet foreign policy position, thereby undermining negotiations with the Soviets scheduled to be undertaken in Europe by Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, has been told many times, and Culver and Hyde add little to our understanding of these events. What they do add, unfortunately, only muddies the waters.

Wallace not only strenuously opposed Truman's decision to oppose Stalin's expansionist ambitions in Eastern Europe, he also spoke of Stalin as a man of peace and of Truman as a dangerous militarist. Culver and Hyde write as if Wallace were right and Truman wrong. Thus they disparagingly report that messages from Harriman in Moscow, stressing that there was an irreconcilable difference between the goals of Stalin and the Soviet Union and those of the West for a world of "free

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nations and peoples," were somehow dangerous and misguided. Wallace, they tell us, was troubled by the "bristling tone" of Harriman's perceptive analysis. They do not cite the bizarre sections of Wallace's diary, dated May 12, 1945, in which Wallace accuses Harriman of starting the anti-Soviet policy, accuses a "faction" of the U.S. Army of seeking war with Russia, and favorably quotes Donald Nelson as supposedly telling him that Harriman "knew nothing about Russia." This, from the man who swallowed Soviet propaganda on his trip in 1944, and was caught in the error by none other than Harriman.

THE COLD WAR created a significant rift in the liberal-left community in America. Most liberals joined with people such as Hubert Humphrey and Eleanor Roosevelt in creating Americans for Democratic Action, a group whose raison d'être was a break with the Popular Front, and which on principle refused membership to American Communists and their supporters. Wallace, by contrast, would work with the Communists in a new front group, the Progressive Citizens of America, which became the base for Wallace's run for the presidency on the Progressive Party ticket in 1948. The heart of Wallace's campaign, and of his foreign policy arguments from 1946 to 1948, was that (as he wrote in his diary on October 16, 1945) "the Russian attitude in the Balkan State was not so greatly different from our attitude with regard to Mexico and Cuba." Our desire for a democratic and non-revolutionary government on neighboring shores was the same as Stalin's demand for the communization of Eastern Europe.

One can learn more about the extent to which Wallace was duped from John Morton Blum's edition of Wallace's diaries, *The Price of Vision: The Diaries of Henry A. Wallace,* than from anything brought to light in Culver's and Hyde's last few chapters. In the Blum edition, for example, we find an entry for November 7, 1945, in which Wallace challenges Senator Arthur Vandenberg's charge that Stalin was abusing the Polish population. Wallace responds that the hostility to which Vandenburg referred came only from unofficial "marauders" wearing Soviet uniforms, and that Stalin guaranteed "he would straighten the situation out." To Wallace, Stalin was always to be given the benefit of the doubt.

Consider another example. In Wallace's diary for January 2, 1946, he recounts that he, Ben Cohen, Justice Hugo Black and others dined at the home of the journalist Joseph Alsop, where they engaged in a discussion of Soviet policy. All present were vigorously opposed to Alsop's distrust of Stalin, and agreed with Chester Bohlen, who arrived late, and declared "he is.... thankful the communists are in charge at the present stage of Russian history." Wallace records favorably that Bohlen recounted a recent dinner with Stalin's foreign affairs adviser Andrei Vishinsky, and was glad to report that Vishinsky agreed with them about "the nature of political freedom and the desirability of it." This was the same Vishinsky who had served as the prosecutor in Stalin's purge trials in 1936.

Then there is the entry for January 28, 1946, in which Wallace meets with his friend and supporter Senator Claude Pepper, affectionately known as "Red Pepper" by his enemies, and for good reason. Pepper, Wallace records, had just come back from a meeting with Stalin, and he informed Wallace that "he didn't think that Stalin's power was as absolute as some folk inferred." The proof? Stalin "was very careful to shake hands with all the members of the Politburo, treating them with the same deference that a cabinet officer would treat the chairmen of important senate committees." It did not take much to fool Henry Wallace.

THERE ARE MANY more such entries in Wallace's journals, and they typify Wallace's outlook, as do his numerous public speeches and statements in support of Stalin's foreign policy goals. Wallace thought that America's main enemy was Churchill and the British Empire. The nascent Soviet empire was of no concern to him, except that he believed that peace could be assured if the United States guaranteed Stalin control of Eastern Europe. For Wallace, there were only two alternatives: an unthinkable war with Russia, or peace with Russia by the path of appeasement. Or as Wallace put it in his famous letter to Truman, "we should ascertain ... what Russia believes to be essential to her own security as a prerequisite to the winning of the peace." Of course, Wallace qualified his position by saying we should agree only to "reasonable Russian guarantees of security." But as time passed, every demand made by Stalin was conceived as "reasonable"; and every response by Truman was deemed militaristic and imperialistic.

When Stalin ordered the coup in Czechoslovakia in February, 1948, he explained it as an act of "pro-Russian consolidation" that was necessitated as a just response to the Truman Doctrine. As he wrote, in a statement not to be found in Culver's and Hyde's book, "men of vision know that the crisis in Czechoslovakia was practically predetermined by the announcements of the Truman doctrine"; and after Jan Masaryk's death, Wallace

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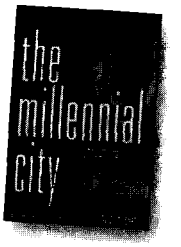

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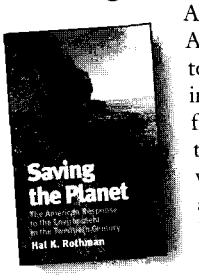

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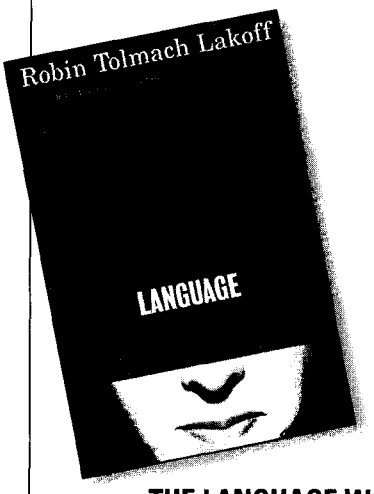

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went on to say that a planned right-wing coup had precipitated the Communist takeover. Similarly, Wallace advocated abandoning Berlin when Stalin imposed the Soviet blockade, and vigorously opposed the formation of NATO, and called the Marshall Plan for reconstruction of Europe the "Martial Plan." As far as Culver and Hyde are concerned, however, what Wallace had to say about all this "proved prophetic." They ridicule Truman's famous diary entry, in which he said that Wallace "wants to disband our armed forces, give Russia our atomic secrets and trust a bunch of adventurers in the Kremlin Politboro. I do not understand a 'dreamer' like that." In fact, it was Truman's rumination that stands out as prophetic, in its understanding of the foolishness of Wallace's dreams.

AFTER NOMINALLY SERVING as editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC, and using it as a platform to build his campaign for a pro-Soviet foreign policy, Wallace eventually accepted the nomination of the new third party, which grew out of his so-called Progressive Citizens of America. The party's chair was an old associate of his from the Department of Agriculture, a left-liberal named C.B. "Beanie" Baldwin, who had been the head of FDR's Farm Security Administration. Baldwin became Wallace's campaign manager in 1948, and for all practical purposes he was the single most important figure in the new party.

Was the American Communist Party behind the Progressive Party? Or did it merely come along and endorse Wallace's candidacy because of his pro-Soviet orientation? Culver and Hyde argue that "certainly Wallace gave no thought to Communist Party wishes in deciding to run" in 1948. But that is the wrong question to ask. The right question, which Culver and Hyde avoid, is whether or not there would have been a Progressive Party campaign had the American Communist Party not sought to create it, and whether or not its secret cadres organized and controlled the entire operation. As I. F. Stone wrote in 1950, "the Communists have been the dominant influence in the Progressive Party.... If it had not been for the Communists, there would have been no Progressive Party."

Wallace insisted that his party stood only for "progressive capitalism." But it owed everything to the organizational work of Baldwin, who (as Culver and Hyde point out) had hammered "together a 'popular front' coalition of Communists, radicals, union organizers, intellectuals, artists, civil rights activists, and preening celebrities." Baldwin's main legal adviser for the new party was John Abt, who had been a part of the secret Communist cell in the Department of Agriculture in the 1930s, and whom Baldwin had asked to be the chief counsel for the Progressive Party. Culver and Hyde note that Abt told Wallace—falsely, as it turns out—that "he was not a Communist."

But what about the mysterious Baldwin? They never raise the question—they seem unaware of even the possibility—that he, too, might have been a Communist, acting under party orders when he was creating Wallace's electoral machine. Indeed, they attack the radio commentator Frank Kingdon, who left the ranks of the new party in a huff, announcing that he was doing so because the "record" proved that Wallace was running because the call came "from the Communist party and the only progressive organization admitting Communists to its membership." Culver and Hyde pronounce that Kingdon's "assertion was baseless." They are wrong, and there is evidence to prove it.

HAD CULVER AND HYDE consulted the Philip Jaffe papers at Emory University, they would have found a long and detailed letter from John Gates, who in 1948 was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the new editor of *The Daily Worker*, to Joseph Starobin, the foreign affairs reporter for the Communist paper and later a historian of the party. Written in 1972, at the time that Starobin's history of the Communist Party was published, Gates wrote to inform Starobin about what he knew were inaccuracies in Starobin's discussion of the Progressive Party. "The Communists," Gates explained, "did not merely endorse the decision of Wallace to form a third party. They were also most instrumental in influencing Wallace to make such a decision."

As for Beanie Baldwin, Gates agreed that those who argued that Baldwin "worked tooth and nail to get Wallace to commit himself is accurate," which is the point that Culver and Hyde also make. But Gates goes on to state that "BB was a Communist and was the chief agent of [party chief Eugene] Dennis and [New York Party political leader Al] Blumberg in influencing Wallace." Indeed, Gates notes that William Z. Foster, the old chairman of the CP, was hesitant about supporting Wallace, given his experience with Senator Robert M. LaFollette's candidacy for president on a third-party ticket in 1924, in which the Comintern had ordered the Communist Party in America to flip-flop overnight, from supporting his run to opposing it and running instead on their own revolutionary ticket. Hence Foster

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"Time is short,
Baby—get ready to
hitch on wings!"
– Kilroy, *Camino Real* 1, iii

Jean LeClerc
as
Casanova

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agreed that a campaign should be run only if Wallace fully committed himself. What happened, Gates informed Starobin, is that "Dennis then saw to it that Wallace would be for [a presidential campaign on a new party] through our agents around Wallace." Wallace "eventually made the decision which the Communists did all they could to get him to make."

Gates, one of the most informed Communist leaders, was writing in private correspondence years later to an old and trusted friend, who had made some of the same erroneous arguments about the roots of the Wallace campaign that Culver and Hyde are making today. But Starobin was writing in the early 1970s, before the opening of various Communist archives here and abroad. Culver and Hyde have no such excuse for repeating the old shibboleths about the Progressive Party being independent of the Communists. Moreover, the only reason that the Communists insisted on the formation of a new party, rather than trying to pressure Truman to move leftward within the ranks of the Democratic Party, is that Stalin was demanding that the Western Communists stand firm with the Soviet Union and oppose the entirety of American foreign policy.

As Truman stole Wallace's domestic thunder by taking a pro-labor position and advocating civil rights for black Americans, the only distinguishing difference between them remained the Progressive Party's pro-Soviet foreign policy—and as long as Wallace stuck by that policy, he and his party became more and more isolated from its would-be supporters. Slowly and surely, more and more of its most prominent supporters broke ranks and endorsed Truman. Eleanor Roosevelt publicly rebuked Wallace, correctly pointing out that "the American Communists will be the nucleus of Mr. Wallace's third party," and other leading New Dealers—many of them Wallace supporters in the 1940s—blasted the new party on solid grounds, because (as some of them said in a public statement) it "has lined up unashamedly with the forces of Soviet totalitarianism."

The only comment that Culver and Hyde make about all this is the rather tepid statement that although only "the most rabid Red-baiters thought Wallace himself a Communist... millions came to believe he was a 'dupe' or a 'fellow traveler,' which of course he was. But Culver and Hyde obviously do not think that this was the case; and they seem to bemoan the fact that the majority of Americans, including American liberals and leftists, did consider Wallace a dupe and a fellow traveler. They appear to resent what they call the "vilification of Wallace and his followers," as if there were no good reasons to treat Wallace and his movement with contempt. Whenever Wallace is rightfully accused of being pro-Soviet, Culver and Hyde exonerate him, mocking "newspapermen and ADA liberals" for claiming that his fight for peace was "further proof of a candidacy hatched in the Kremlin or a candidate held prisoner by a leftist 'palace guard.'" But of course that was exactly the case. As Dwight Macdonald wrote in 1948, in his delightfully wicked exegesis on what he called "Wallese" and "Wallaceland," it was but "a region of perpetual fogs, caused by the warm winds of the liberal Gulf Stream coming in contact with the Soviet glacier."

Two years after Truman's electoral victory—and the terrible showing of Wallace's party, which came in last, behind even the Dixiecrat candidacy of Strom Thurmond, with no electoral-college votes and a large number of voters in only two states, New York and California—Wallace himself broke ranks with the pro-Communist left. His break was occasioned by the North Korean invasion of South Korea and the American entry into the Korean War. Much to the dismay of Baldwin and the remaining fellow travelers and Communists in the Progressive Party, Wallace gave his support to Truman. He resumed his life as a scientific agriculturalist, and retreated to his beloved Farvue farm in South Salem, New York, where he worked developing new techniques for breeding chickens, including an all-white-meat chicken that lay green eggs. (I spent a day with Wallace on his farm in New York in 1960, where I was fortunate to become the first scholar to gain use of Wallace's still privately held diaries. He and his wife treated me to a home-cooked lunch and dinner, with all the trimmings. As I was leaving the farm, Wallace took me to see his chickens and proudly gave me a carton of green eggs, which he insisted that I give to my mother.)

By 1956, Wallace had moved back to the Republican roots of his father, and endorsed Dwight D. Eisenhower in his presidential campaign. He died in 1965. Culver and Hyde do tell us much about Wallace's awful, extraordinary career, and they succeed in restoring Wallace to the pantheon of significant New Deal figures. It is a shame that, like others who have written about Wallace, they, too, fell under his illusioned sway. ■

Robes, Tat, Rig, and Scunge

By Adam Kirsch

Learning Human: Selected Poems by Les Murray

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 230 pp., $27)

Fredy Neptune: A Novel in Verse by Les Murray

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 255 pp., $27.50)

Les Murray, born in 1938, has been called Australia's "de facto poet laureate." He has been awarded many of its literary prizes, and he is the subject of a full-scale biography (to be published in the United States later this year). In 1999 Murray was asked to write a preamble for the nation's draft constitution. And in recent years he has become a familiar presence to American readers as well, to the point that he can be considered—with Walcott, Brodsky, and Heaney—one of those "international" (that is, non-Anglo-American) poets that have been at the center of English poetry in the last twenty years.

Not that there is anything international about Murray's poetry, in style or in intention. In fact, it would be hard to think of a contemporary poet more insistent on his

Adam Kirsch writes frequently about poetry for The New Republic.

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rootedness, his tribal loyalties. The battery of his art is charged by the positive and negative legacies of Bunyah, New South Wales, his childhood home: love for its landscape, its people and vernacular and working-class ethos; and hostility bordering on hatred for citified pretension, ideology, snobbery. Obviously, such a conflict can easily slide into simple binarism, a war of the healthy low against the corrupt high, and Murray is not always averse, in his poems and in his public statements, to such crudeness. (He called his last book *Subhuman Redneck Poems*.) At their extremes, Murray's praise and condemnation can sour into piety and resentment; but in the broad median of his art, he is a poet of great linguistic power and moral energy.

As he is revealed in most of his lyric poems, Murray is a character, in both senses of the word, and the character has a recognizable literary parentage. In his desire to encompass—and to give moral meaning to—the idea of Australia, he can suggest Whitman. It is hard not to hear Whitman in the psalm-like rhythms of "The Buladelah-Taree Holiday Song Cycle":

> It is good to come out after driving and
> walk on bare grass;
> walking out, looking all around,
> relearning that country.
> Looking out for snakes, and looking out
> for rabbits as well;
> going into the shade of myrtles to try
> their cupped climate, swinging by
> one hand around them,
> in that country of the Holiday....

But the comparison can easily mislead. Murray does not have Whitman's endless erotic adhesiveness. (His erotic feelings are deeply troubled, as can be seen particularly in *Fredy Neptune*.)

Murray is not open, universal, inviting; he excludes with rigor, defining himself and his people in large part through opposition. He is closer to Frost in his admiration of the farmer's and worker's hard, suspicious manliness, as in an episode from the same "song cycle":

> The warriors are cutting timber with
> brash chainsaws; they are trimming
> hardwood pit-props and loading them;
> *Is that an order*? they hoot at the
> peremptory lorry driver, who laughs;
> he is also a warrior....
>
> Addressed on the beach by a pale man,
> they watch waves break and are
> reserved, refusing pleasantry;
> they joke only with fellow warriors,
> chaffing about try-ons and the police,
> not slighting women.

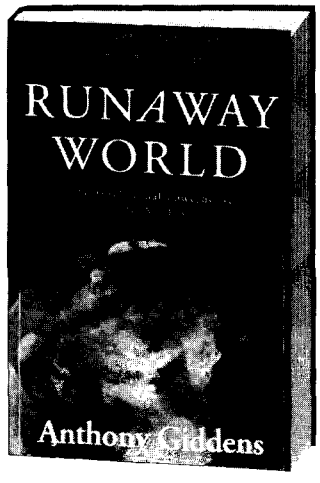
It is easy to imagine one of Murray's "warriors" impulsively trying to kill a "pale," condescending outsider, as a farm-worker does in Frost's "The Code": "Never you say a thing like that to a man,/Not if he values what he is. God, I'd as soon/Murdered him as left out his middle name." And as with Frost, Murray's code of silence and honor occasionally turns into philistine scolding of city smooth-talkers: "Snobs mind us off religion/nowadays, if they can./Fuck them. I wish you God"; "No. Not from me. Never./Not a step in your march,/not a vowel in your unison,/bray that shifts to bay."

But most of Murray's poems, especially the earlier ones, condemn less and praise more. They have some of the intense vitalism of Dylan Thomas, who is affectionately parodied in the early "Vindaloo in Merthyr Tydfil" ("I sang for my pains like the free"). "The Burning Truck," the very first poem in *Learning Human*, a selection of Murray's verse since 1965, turns a freak wartime event—a truck, strafed and set afire, continues to speed down the street—into a symbol of liberation:

> And all of us who knew our place and
> prayers
> clutched our verandah-rails and
> window-sills,
> begging that truck between our teeth
> to halt,
> keep going, vanish, strike ... but set us
> free.
>
> And then we saw the wild boys of
> the street
> go running after it.
> And as they followed, cheering,
> on it crept,
> windshield melting now, canopy-frame
> a cage
> torn by gorillas of flame, and it kept on
> over the tramlines, past the church,
> on past
> the last lit windows, and then out of
> the world
> with its disciples.

Here is a carefully worked-out contrast between the types that Auden called "reader" and "rider." Those who know their place, hemmed in by verandahs, spectators at windows, long to be set free; the wild boys actually achieve freedom, by violating the boundary of tram-line (which echoes the "rails" of the verandahs) and church (thus becoming a new set of "disciples," apostles of the truck). And "gorillas of flame" shows Murray's ability to conjure up a strange, seemingly hyperbolic image, which on reflection is both thematically

"An Intellectual Powerhouse" —The New Yorker



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and descriptively exact.

In its mature form, however, Murray's ideal type is not quite as "wild" or destructive as "The Burning Truck" suggests. He comes to recognize that his ethos of forceful, taciturn masculinity lends itself easily to violence; and in a number of poems outlining his ethical concepts, he takes care to disavow mere aggression. (Recall that Murray's lumberjack "warriors" avoid "slighting women.") Those poems—especially "First Essay on Interest," "Equanimity," "The Quality of Sprawl," and "The Dream of Wearing Shorts Forever"—are not a sequence, but together they propose a distinct, and distinctly Australian, moral code.

"The Dream of Wearing Shorts Forever" is especially revealing of Murray's mind, and of his language, which delights in making the familiar strange:

> If the cardinal points of costume
> are Robes, Tat, Rig and Scunge,
> where are shorts in this compass?

The words sound like Australian slang, but they may as well be invented; the poem's purpose is to define each one, to build concepts under them. "Robes," of course, are a formal costume, standing for official public roles:

> the toga, the kilt, the lava-lava
> the Mahatma's cotton dhoti;
>
> archbishops and field marshals
> at their ceremonies never wear
> shorts.

"Tat," on the other hand, is a kind of fake politicized casualness:

> Shorts can be Tat,
> Land-Rovering bush-environmental tat,
> socio-political ripped-and-metal-stapled
> tat,
> solidarity-with-the-Third-World tat tvam
> asi. . . .

It is noteworthy that Murray makes rather obscure use of the Sanskrit phrase "tat tvam asi, or "this art thou," an expression of Vedic wisdom about the unity of all things which was beloved of Schopenhauer. The poet disdains the fashionable embrace of such Indian mysticism, but it is clearly something that he knows. Here is one sign, among many in his poetry, that Murray has a far wider frame of reference than his "character" might suggest.

"Rig" is gear, shorts made for use:

> are farmers' rig leathery with salt and
> bonemeal,
> are sailors' and branch bankers' rig,
> the crisp golfing style
> of our youngest male National Costume.

Farmers' rig may be well enough, but Murray warns that even this can be perverted by bourgeois fashion, can become merely a costume. And finally there is "Scunge," which sounds just like what it means:

> Scunge, which is real negligée
> housework in a swimsuit, pyjamas worn
> all day,
> is holiday, freedom from ambition.
> Scunge makes you invisible
> to the world and yourself.

These lines indicate that Murray's dislike of pretention and fashion does not lead him to the opposite extreme, a kind of beatnik embrace of squalor, of "dropping out." "Real negligée"—that, is real neglect—is another kind of sin.

If these four words have been defined as various abuses of shorts, then shorts themselves must occupy the center of the sartorial "compass": neither formal nor squalid, neither yuppie- nor hippie-fashionable, they are simple, comfortable, useful, unpretentious:

> Ideal for getting served last
> in shops of the temperate zone
> they are also ideal for going
> home, into space,
> into time, to farm the mind's
> Sabine acres
> for product or subsistence.

And here, delicately dropped into this slangy poem, are the "Sabine acres" that take us back to Horace, and make clear that the quality Murray is praising—call it "equanimity," as he does in another poem, or self-sufficiency, or principled simplicity—is both Australian and Roman, both folk and literary. "Why exchange my Sabine valley for more wearisome wealth?" asks Horace. And Murray asks, Why wear robes when you can wear shorts? At such a moment, the local escapes provincialism and becomes another habitation of the universal; and the poems in which Murray makes this flight are by far the most interesting in *Learning Human*.

More often, Murray approaches his native ground as a celebrator or a chronicler, and these modes are rather less engaging. It is curious that even his mobile style leaves a description of "Water-Gardening in an Old Farm Dam" strangely inert:

> Blueing the blackened water
> that I'm widening with my spade
> as I lever up water tussocks
> and chuck them ashore like sopping
> comets
> is a sun-point, dazzling heatless
> acetylene, under tadpoles that swarm
> wobbling, like a species of flies
> and buzzing bubbles that speed
> upward like many winged species.

There is no doubt that this is something Murray has closely seen, and his whimsical, ungainly, heavily worked language is an attempt to make the reader see it. This is the style that Derek Walcott, writing in these pages in 1989, described as "a syntax that digests iron and spits out petals."

But it is weighed down, first by the natural resistance of poetry to the visual, and second by piety towards the land and working the land. Such piety—or, less pejoratively, such reverence—is deeply antagonistic to speech; it grows out of silent work, and it involves a kind of loss of the personal mind. This emotion is central to Murray's rural, working-class, and religious identity—it is the gift withheld from the "city storemen and accounts clerks" who, in another poem, go sightseeing in the wetlands, and are left, forlornly, "remembering things about themselves"—and, perhaps for that very reason, it drains the tension from his descriptive nature-poems. This is especially evident in the series of pantheistic poems that try to get inside the minds of various animals—for instance, "Shellback Tick":

> Match-head of groins
> nailhead in fur
> blank itch of blank
> the blood thereof
> is the strength thereof is
> the jellied life-breath is O the
> sweet incision. . . .

Nature also provides less scope for Murray's fertile metaphorical imagination, which animates many delightful, darting poems. "The Chimes of Neverwhere" is a nearly Metaphysical series of counterfacts:

> The neither state of Neverwhere
> is hard to place as near or far
> since all things that didn't take place
> are there
> and things that have lost the place
> they took:
>
> Herr Hitler's buildings, King James'
> cigar,
> the happiness of Armenia,
> the Abelard children, the Manchus'
> return
> are there with the Pictish grammar book.

And in "Accordion Music," this metaphorical mode is fused with a defiant pro-

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letarianism that comes, along with the meter, by way of Kipling:

A backstrapped family Bible that
consoles virtue and sin,
for it opens top and bottom, and harps
both out and in:

it shuffles a deep pack of cards, flirts an
inverted fan
and stretches to a shelf of books about
the pain of man.
It can play the sob in Jesus!, the
cavernous *baastards* note,
it can wheedle you for cigarettes or drop
a breathy quote:

it can conjure Paris up, or home,
unclench a chinstrap jaw
but it never sang for a nob's baton,
or lured the boys to war.

Murray writes many poems about local legends or what sound like family anecdotes, but he seldom goes so far as to tap that never-failing source of interest for most poets: himself. This is not a small reticence in our autobiographical time. Yet when he does venture into his own personality and his own history, one is quite surprised to find a vivid unhappiness behind the bluff persona. "Corniche" opens with a parody of Philip Larkin, a poet with whom Murray has no surface similarities, and proceeds outdo him in disgust and despair:

I work all day and hardly drink at all.
I can reach down and feel if I'm
depressed.
I adore the Creator because I made
myself
and a few times a week a wire jags in
my chest...

Laugh, who never shrank around
wizened genitals there
or killed themselves to stop dying. The
blow that never falls
batters you stupid. Only gradually do
you notice a slight scorn in you for what
appals.

The specifically sexual disgust in "wizened genitals" is even more prominent, and more personal, in "Burning Want":

From just on puberty, I lived in funeral:
mother dead of miscarriage, father trying
to be dead,
we'd boil sweat-brown cloth; cows
repossessed the garden.
Lovemaking brought death, was the
unuttered principle....

But all my names were fat-names, at my
new town school.
Between classes, kids did erocide:
destruction of sexual morale.
Mass refusal of unasked love: that works.
Boys cheered as seventeen-
year-old girls came on to me, then ran
back whinnying ridicule.

In an earlier poem, "Quintets for Robert Morley," Murray (who is famously large) had praised "the fat" with comic hyperbole as "the earliest/civilized, and civilizing, humans,/the first to win the leisure,/sweet boredom, life-enhancing sprawl/that require style." Now, unlikely though it seems, obesity looks like the wound behind Murray's bow.

THE PAIN OF that wound can be gauged by the size of *Fredy Neptune*, which might be seen as Murray's attempt to describe it, to explain it, and to cure it. A verse novel of some 1,250 eight-line stanzas, much bigger than all the poems in *Learning Human* put together, it is an *Odyssey* of erocide. Its hero's picaresque adventures are clearly inspired by *Candide* and *Don Juan*, and perhaps by *The Tin Drum*. But where Juan's travels are punctuated by fornication, Fredy is neutered: for most of the book, he is literally unable to feel a thing. The condition is symbolic, of course, but it is never merely notional. It is Murray's ability to balance symbol with realistic detail, to create objective correlatives for his feelings about sex, violence, class, and politics, that makes *Fredy Neptune* such a triumphant achievement.

The title is the circus name of Fredy Boettcher, born in Australia to German parents in the late nineteenth century. The poem follows him from the outbreak of the First World War past the end of the Second World War, as he travels everywhere—Istanbul, Berlin, Brisbane, Kentucky, Hollywood, Shanghai—and takes any job that he can get—merchant sailor, circus freak, lumberjack, movie extra, bounty hunter. He is driven from place to place by his strange condition, which he develops after witnessing a massacre of Armenian women by the Turks: in addition to killing his senses, the disease gives him superhuman strength. Each time Fredy begins to feel at home somewhere, his uncanny difference comes to light, and he is driven out by fear and loathing.

The disease is a symbol, but Murray rescues it from allegory by layering its meanings. Most obviously, Fredy's numbness is a defensive response to the evil of the world. Brought on by the Armenian genocide, it is fueled by a series of large and small abominations that he witnesses in his travels. Beyond the moral dimension, however, there is a psychological dimension, which suggests a more direct parallel

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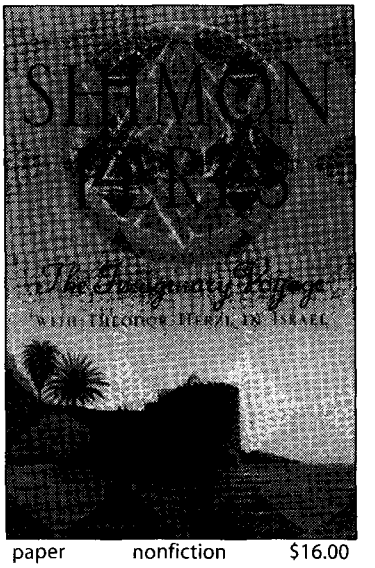

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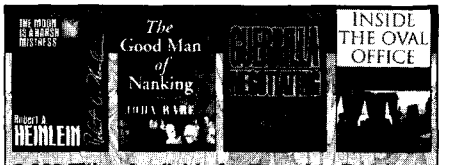

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between Fredy and his creator. Like the Murray of "Burning Want," Fredy suffers a sexual trauma—one of the worst features of his curse is his inability to feel anything during sex, even with the wife he loves—and this can be read, in Murray's highly somatic verse, as a psychosomatic symptom, a corollary to emotional deadness. Fredy's combination of power and clumsiness can be seen as a fable of obesity. At one point Fredy describes his attempt to counterfeit ordinary feelings as "cracking normal," a clear echo of Murray's own effort at "learning human." And then there is also a political element: as an outsider, a freak, Fredy inspires the same intolerance and fear that leads to racism. ("The last, the very/last thing you allow ever: to be caught out both different and helpless./Humans kill you for less.") But finally, and above all, his loss is spiritual. He seeks everywhere for a synthesis of soul and body, ghost and machine.

Yet the book is not weighed down by this cargo of meanings. It has the exaggerated simplicity and the frantic pace of an action-movie. The key to its success is Murray's decision to pair Fredy's weakness with his outlandish strength, turning him into a kind of Superman; he is forever lifting cars, or brawling with villains, or making narrow escapes, and thus avoids passive suffering, dull victimhood. The artificiality of the form encourages our suspension of disbelief: Fredy can do more, and see more, than we would accept in straight fiction, because we do not expect realism from a "novel in verse." At the same time, the imperative to clarity over such a long poem strips Murray's verse of its knottier extravagances, while still allowing a witty, surprising use of language.

Abacus

Nephew of Daedalus
counting your grains of sand,
nervous, bookish pupil

of everything abstract,
the bead and wire routine
got you pretty far,

got you into the temple,
gave the thinkers
something to play with

besides their beards,
gave them permission
to ask how much is much?

and how many
can many really be?
and is more necessarily more

or is it a less complicated
form of less? Suddenly
zeros were a dime a dozen,

stars, termites and eternity
scattered but negotiable
and your secret name, *dust*,

was on everybody's lips.

Patrick Moran

LANGUAGE ITSELF IS one of the poem's major subjects. Fredy is bilingual, in English and German, which is both an asset and a danger in time of war. During the First World War, he is asked why he has never been wounded in combat:

> I'd been sounded, politely, on how I kept
> out of the strafe.
> (The punishment? Eh? Oh!) Torpedoed.
> Amidships. I was in the Navy.

Murray leaves it to the reader to follow the linguistic slippage: in English, "strafe" means gunfire from an airplane, but Fredy hears it as the German word *Strafe*, "punishment." "Eh? Oh!" is the only clue that he has made and then corrected this mistake. Even less explicit, but still carefully intended, is the fact that he is led to this error by his intense fear of being found out: he is expecting the "punishment" for his strangeness at every moment. These elisions are everywhere in the poem, and they help to keep the reader alert over its long stretches.

Fredy's dual heritage also allows a certain impartiality about the wars that surround him. Murray does not allow Fredy, or the reader, the consolation of seeing guilt and depravity only on the German side of the First, or even the Second, World War. ("There were no sides for me," Fredy says; "both were mine. I'd seen them both.") After the Armenian atrocity, he goes on to witness a British massacre in Palestine:

> Two army corps, trapped hopeless in a
> steep gorge,
>
> a traffic jam made with bombs and guns
> at each end
> then butchered at leisure. The Turks had
> been retreating from Nablus
> down to the Jordan. You can't take
> surrenders from the air,
> so the orders were: Destroy them. Day
> after bloody day, packed thousands,
> anything standing, lay it out,
> anything still moving, nail it.
> The blood-splash of little bombs
> wet us, perking over the side
> at a hundred feet, two hundred.

Consistently, perhaps a bit programmatically, Murray shows us a balance of evils. Fredy's widowed mother, born in Germany, takes up with a fanatical anti-Semite and moves back to Nazi Dresden; but she is driven to this step, in part, by the vicious Hun-baiting of her Australian neighbors. (Of course, she ends up being incinerated by Allied firebombs, another example, not of moral equivalence exactly, but of the awful consequences of the *lex talionis*.) Later Fredy manages to spirit out of Germany a retarded boy who would have been castrated under Nazi hygiene laws; but when he brings the boy to ostensibly free Australia, he is locked up in a barbaric mental hospital. One of the few heroic figures in the book is Sam Mundine, half-Jewish and half-Aborigine, a living example of the symmetry of persecutions.

This is not to say that *Fredy Neptune* reads like a catalogue of atrocities. Murray's vigorous language, his curiosity, and his love of detail keep it from becoming solemn or didactic. But he is intent on showing the many ways in which human beings pervert or blind themselves into doing evil. There is self-righteousness: "Most folk preen and watch themselves sidelong,/playing themselves, the Farmer, the sacrificing Mother." There is patriotism: "*Our jail fought the German jail. No difference*,/was his slant on the Great War." There is the lust for control over others, symbolized for Murray by the police: "When the police revolution comes/you find you can't guess who are police." Most troubling of all, there is the possibility that evil is not an abnormality but our truest primal condition. As an ex-Communist turned fascist tells Fredy, "Nature's a Nazi./It's such relief, coming home to a bullshit-free State-principle./With Marx and old Jesus and the rest, you're always paddling/Against the natural flow of blood and shit."

That last, of course, is another name for original sin; and *Fredy Neptune* is at bottom a Christian poem. (Murray dedicated *Subhuman Redneck Poems* "To the glory of God.") Just after receiving his curse, Fredy visits the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, where a priest predicts: "If ever you can pray/with a single heart to be free of

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it, it will leave you that day". But it is not until the next to last page of the book that Fredy can bring himself to pray, and even then the prayer does not take the form he, or we, might expect. After all the evil that he has seen, he finds he must ask not for God's forgiveness, but to forgive God:

> Forgive God, my self said.
> I shuddered at that one. Judging Him
> and sensing life eternal,
> said my self, are different hearts. You
> want a single heart, to pray.
> Choose one and drop one. I looked inside
> them both
> and only one of them allowed prayer,
> so I chose it,
> and my prayer was prayed and sent,
> already as I chose it.

Coming at the end of such a long and difficult journey, the passage has a real spiritual integrity. It seems genuinely Christian in its call for a voluntary immolation of reason, of judgment, as a sacrifice to God. As in the Book of Job, God cannot be called to account, he can only be submitted to; and submission brings healing and restoration.

This does not mean that the religious "message" of *Fredy Neptune* entirely wins one's assent. The poem's understanding of evil is limited by Fredy's blamelessness; he is always the victim and the witness of sin, never the sinner. And without the sympathy that comes from a recognition of his own potential for evil, he cannot really understand or explain why anyone does evil. He can make only accusations and lamentations. This deficiency is also at the root of Fredy's spiritual pride: most people may occasionally feel the need to "forgive God," but more often they are aware of their own need for God's forgiveness.

Even with these reservations, though, *Fredy Neptune* is an extraordinarily thoughtful work, rich in both religious and worldly understanding. One usually approaches a poet's verse-novel or epic with hesitation, willing at best to extend it the credit built up by his or her lyric poems. But Murray's novel in verse is in some ways even better than the poems of *Learning Human*: clearer, gentler, less belligerent, it is a welcoming introduction to an important body of work. ■

CORRESPONDENCE

continued from page 5

we must support (1) returning Elián González to Communist Cuba, where parental rights don't even exist; and (2) illicit and brute state force against private citizens, as long as our government purports to be working on behalf of fathers. We beg to differ.

FRC believes that the government should serve and protect the family. But Cuba's own constitution only recognizes parental authority "so long as [parental] influence does not go against the political objectives of the state." In such a regime, the family is subordinate to the state, and any talk of parental rights is a sham. To this day no one knows the true wishes of Elián's father, Juan Miguel González, who has been under the watchful eye of Cuban government operatives since Castro elevated this case to a national cause.

Reno's order to storm a private home to capture Elián was a reckless use of potentially lethal force against U.S. citizens who were fighting the government in court, as all Americans have the right to do. Just three days earlier, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals had handed Elián's Miami relatives a favorable decision and maintained its order that Elián could have a preliminary asylum hearing on May 11. Embarrassed by this defeat and impatient with the courts and Elián's extended family, the Justice Department put the lives of these citizens on the line by ordering federal agents armed with machine guns to break down the doors and seize the boy. The risks of such an operation are obvious, since lethal arms are involved and reactions from both agents and victims are unpredictable. In sum, this was recklessness of an astounding kind.

No one likes to lose in the courts, and no one likes the time-consuming nature of litigation. But time is the price we pay for orderly dispute resolution: civilized people avail themselves of appeals until all legal avenues are exhausted and then, typically, are able to live with the results. The Miami relatives were doing precisely that, and they had a right to expect as much from government officials. Instead, the Justice Department pulled the plug on the entire legal process and used brute force to subject citizens to its will. When ordinary citizens behave in that fashion, it's anarchy. When government does, it's a police state. In our system of law, it doesn't matter only that justice is done; it matters how it is done.

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Exile

IT'S A SAD STATE OF AFFAIRS when the only person speaking up for your country is Madeleine Albright—especially when she is speaking out of both sides of her mouth. So seems to be the case with Iran. In the course of one month, Albright has gone from pledging to support Iranian President Mohammad Khatami's reform agenda and hailing "the democratic winds in Iran" to lobbying the World Bank not to lend money to improve Iranian public health because Tehran doesn't uphold the rule of law. But, as frustrating as Albright's "two steps forward, one step back" rapprochement is, even more frustrating is the response of Iranians in America. That is because there is no response.

FOR YEARS I JUSTIFIED IRANIAN-American silence as the understandable reaction of a shell-shocked community. Fleeing to a country that broadcasts for 444 nights in a row the status of hostages being held by your homeland is not exactly a formula for politicization. Nor is seeing footage of burning American flags and signs reading DEATH TO THE GREAT SATAN. At that time, the most proactive thing Iranian-Americans could do was keep their heads down. But 21 years have now passed, and the scars have had time to fade. Iranians are one of the wealthiest ethnic groups in America, with economic networks ranging from successful lawyers in the Washington, D.C., suburbs to Gucci-store owners on Rodeo Drive. The ingredients for an Iranian lobby as powerful as the Cuban lobby would seem to be all there; but something is still missing from the recipe.

IF IRANIANS HAD AN ETHNIC LOBBY, Los Angeles would be their Miami. Home to nearly one million Iranians, many of whom were drawn there in the late '70s by its familiar climate and economic virility, Southern California houses the largest community of Iranians outside Iran. And, come to think of it, the city may be part of the problem. When the Italians and the Jews arrived in New York a century ago, they found a city racked by titanic struggles between urban machines and goo-goo reformers. When Iranians came to L.A., they encountered a city racked by titanic struggles between Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sylvester Stallone. It's a cliché, but Los Angeles may be the most apolitical city in the United States, a city that radiates a seductive indifference to anything so serious as government. And how soothing apolitical L.A. must have been to émigrés who ran for their lives from a bloodthirsty revolution. Los Angeles allowed Iranians to numb their consciences after the political failure that swallowed their country.

BUT L.A. ISN'T THE ONLY EXPLANAtion. The Greeks have the Turks; the Arabs, the Israelis; and the Miami Cubans, Castro. Without a central figure or discernible enemy, it was hard to get Iranians to band together under a rallying cry. Although most expatriates were not supporters of the Ayatollah Khomeini or his perfidious theocracy, saying anything against him still felt blasphemous to many exiles. Criticizing a monarch or a Communist leader is one thing, but condemning a religious figure who speaks with the assumed authority of your faith is psychologically more complex (think of the difficulty many secular Arab-Americans have criticizing Hamas or the reluctance of secular Jews to criticize the ultra-Orthodox).

FOR IRANIANS, THE GUILT OF ESCAPE also proved politically paralyzing. One older, well-known intellectual who escaped to America in 1979 summed up what I think many Iranians internalized. When I asked him why Iranian-Americans never formed a lobby against the Islamic government, he regretfully replied: "What right did we have to oppose the Islamic republic? We were the ones who ran away.... If we weren't so consumed with our individual lives, we would have stayed and defended our worth. We wouldn't have allowed our country to become the embarrassment it is today." Viewed as traitors by many who stayed, Iranian-Americans lacked the self-confidence of the Miami Cubans, the self-confidence to say they could speak more legitimately for Iran than the people who now lead its government could. In addition, many transposed their bitterness at the revolution onto the Western powers—whose meddling, they believed, hastened the Shah's fall. The émigrés sought refuge in the United States but harbored tremendous resentment toward the U.S. government. With this frame of mind, it seemed senseless and absurd for Iranians to mobilize to influence U.S. foreign policy.

BUT THINGS MAY BE CHANGING; THE fatigue and distress that enveloped the generation that fled Iran has not been passed on to my own. My generation is less scarred by the revolution and at greater ease in democratic forums. In short, we are American enough to form a lobby yet Iranian enough to care about what happens to our homeland. The only real Iranian lobby in Washington is Iranians for International Cooperation (IIC). Boasting 900 members worldwide, IIC was started in 1997 by a 23-year-old Iranian staffer on the Hill. As IIC matures over the next several years, it will become the voice that calls for World Bank lending, lobbies to end the fingerprinting of Iranian citizens at U.S. customs, and pushes the government in Tehran to halt human rights abuses, like the current show trial of 13 Iranian Jews.

UNLIKE THE CUBAN-AMERICAN LOBBY, which hit its prime with the first generation of émigrés but has been losing steam since the passing of Cuban-American National Foundation leader Jorge Mas Canosa in 1997, the Iranian-American lobby will only grow stronger. And that's a good thing, I think. But, watching Cuban-Americans standing vigil outside the home of Lázaro González this spring, I began to have second thoughts. Cuban Miami's fight for Elián González revealed a community that is close-knit and powerfully unified, but unified by a political obsession so strong that it seemed to overwhelm any other aspect of Cuban-American identity. By focusing so much attention on control of the state, I wondered, had Cuban-Americans deemphasized their connection to Cuban culture?

I COULDN'T HELP CONTRASTING THE scene in Little Havana with another scene of nationalist fervor—a fervor that had everything to do with the cultural bonds that link Iranians across the world and nothing at all to do with the state that keeps them apart. The 1998 World Cup provoked a tremendous outpouring of emotion among Iranian-Americans. Bars and restaurants in Los Angeles were packed with accent-free Iranian twentysomethings clad in the national colors: green, white, and red. When Iran defeated the United States two to one, there were not only triumphant screams but also tears; finally, something positive was coming out of Iran. When the game ended at 1:30 a.m. Tehran time, instead of listening to rants from conservative clerics, we watched Iran's jubilant youth flood the city. It was a long-awaited thaw, and, in some magical way, Iranians in the two countries seemed unified again—unified in a way that transcended government or politics. Unified in a way that not even the most fearsome ethnic lobby could hope to achieve.

NEGAR AKHAVI

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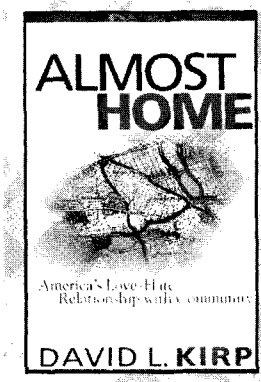

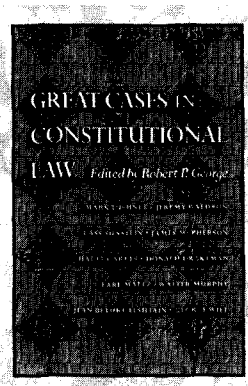

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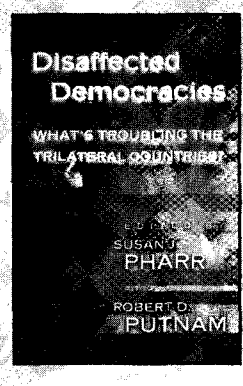

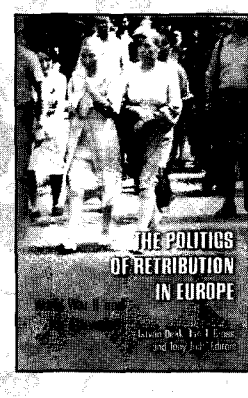

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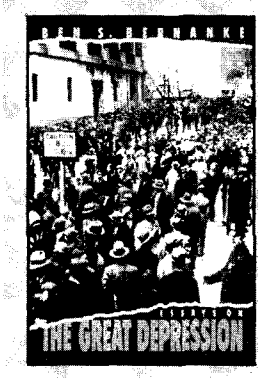

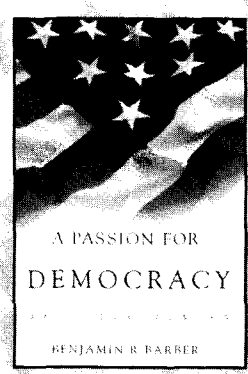

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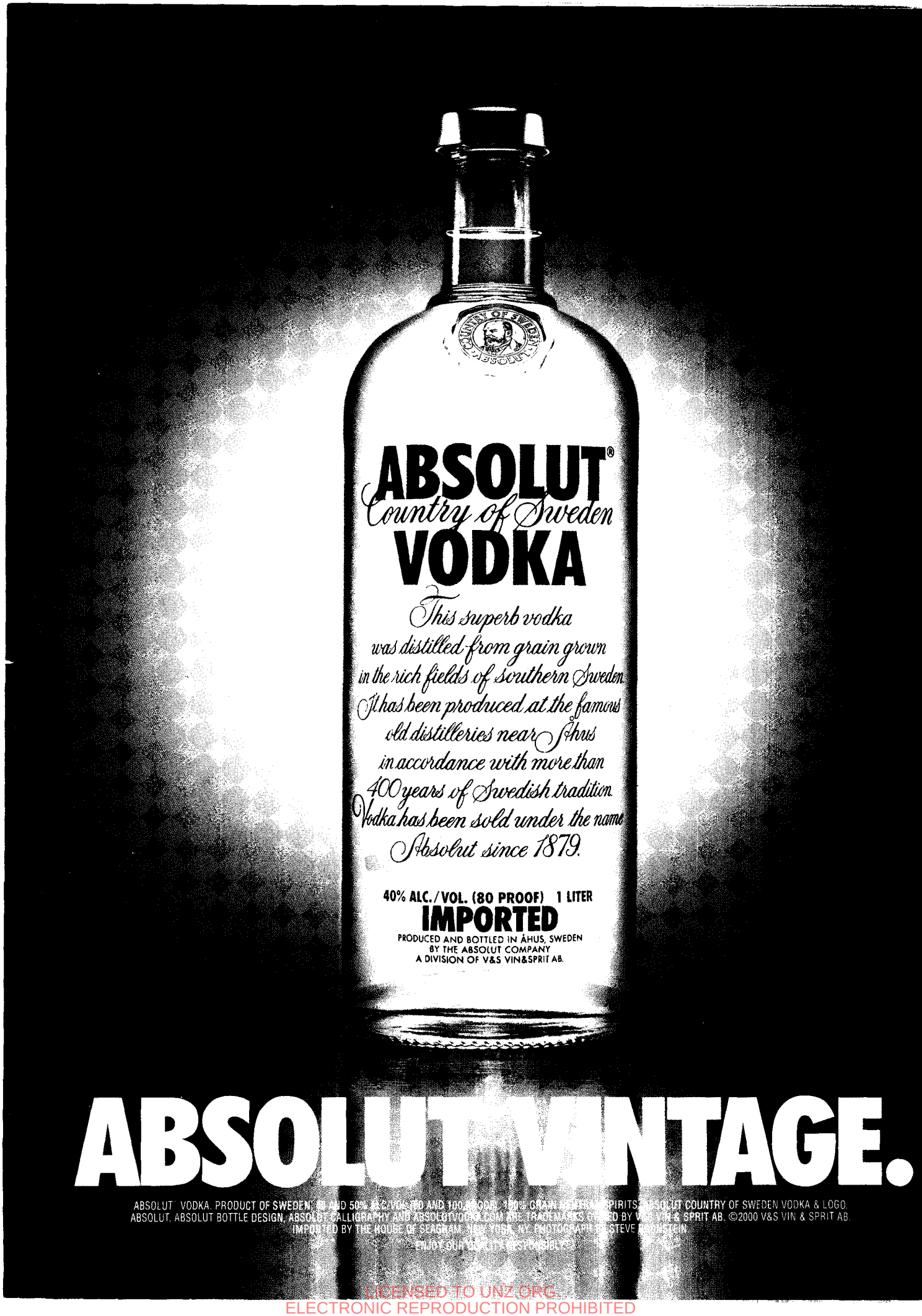

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